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THE IRISH ORATORS

A History of

IRELAND'S FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

By CLAUDE G. BOWERS

Illustrated With Photographs

"*Ireland is a land worth fighting for.*"
—THOMAS FRANCIS MEAGHER.

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FOREWORD

It would have been unfortunate if the author of this volume had not placed it in the hands of the public. His demand and success as a public speaker upon Irish topics led him to a deep study of the history of that glorious nation, and the deeper he studied the more fascinated he became. His work is imbued with the spirit of his own researches and in turn fascinates the reader.

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Among the great men who pass in review, Daniel O'Connell is given high place and justly so, for he was a most worthy leader of the people for over a generation. His preeminence recalls the estimation of him held by the Count de Montalembert who said that O'Connell was the finest orator whom he had listened to, or whose works he had read.

The reader will find this valuable contribution to the story of Ireland's greatness impartial, instructive and interesting and of such appeal that he will not be satisfied until he reads to the end.

J. Card Gibbons

INTRODUCTION

The history of Ireland is one of romance and tragedy. To trace the inspiring story of her struggle for nationality from the beginning of the great parliamentary battle in the Dublin parliament to the present time, letting her interpret her own aspirations and voice her own protest through her chosen tribunes, has been an absorbing task. Deprived of arms by her oppressors, she has fought her fight with brains. Her challenge to the justice of the world has been made by voice and pen. Thus her orators have been her leaders—the interpreters of her aspirations—and if, at times, the spirit of militancy has been evoked, it is worthy of notice that the greater portion of her militants have been as brilliant on the platform as they have been brave upon the field.

The battle for Irish rights began in a mild and ineffective manner under the leadership of Doctor Lucas, the writer, and Anthony Malone, the orator, a few years before Henry Flood entered the Irish house of commons in the latter half of the eighteenth century, but of this we know little beyond what tradition has bequeathed us. It was with the entrance of Flood that the vigorous challenge of the English pretension to the right of domineering over Ireland began. He was the first of the tribunes. With the single exception of a few dark years during the fifth decade of the nineteenth century, the tribunate of the Irish people has

been filled by an orator and leader of exceptional brilliance, in whose activities centered the hope of the race.

Flood, Grattan, Plunkett, O'Connell, Meagher, Butt, Parnell—the careers of these men, in the ensemble, constitute the history of Ireland from the vice-royalty of the insufferable Townsend to the beginning of the present century. Two splendid and inspiring men of genius who never aspired to political leadership but whose work for Ireland constitutes an essential part of any history of the struggle for nationality were John Philpot Curran and Robert Emmet. The one wrought as brilliantly in the courts, and the other as inspiringly upon the scaffold, as O'Connell on the hustings, or Parnell in the halls of Westminster.

Thus I have tried to set forth through the studies of these nine men all the essential facts in the history of Ireland from the middle of the eighteenth to the beginning of the present century.

In treating of the political history of Ireland through studies of the great orators who have been her leaders I have had another object in view—to emphasize the genius of the Irish race. In the long list there is not one who does not tower above the level of the commonplace. Scarcely one there is whose eloquence would not have imparted luster and distinction to any race, or any period, in the history of the world. Even the militant band of patriots who have questioned the feasibility of constitutional agitation can consistently respect these men who fought the patriots' battle with voice and pen—for they, too, stood in constant danger of physical violence.

Thus, during the shameless period of Castlereagh's desperate enterprise, Grattan lived within the shadow of the assassin's dagger; and Plunkett, confronted by the dueling club of the mercenaries, organized for the assassination of the patriots, met the danger with a bold challenge to their cowardice.

Thus Curran was in constant jeopardy of his life and liberty while defending the patriots of '98.

Thus Emmet immolated his noble life upon the scaffold and rests in an unmarked and an unknown grave.

Thus O'Connell, often marked for murder, fed on prison fare.

Thus Meagher was sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered.

Thus Parnell was thrown like a felon into the gloomy confines of Kilmainham prison.

These tribunes of Erin were not fair weather patriots or men of idle words. They faced throughout their lives the storms of hate, and backed their words with their lives.

Without exception, they were men of fascination, magnetism and ineffable charm—fit characters for a canvas or a romance.

They were great, not alone because of the Cause they stood for, but because nature molded them from superior clay. Not one of them was a mere methodical plodder, rising to prestige and power by cunning or through the laborious cultivation of ordinary talents. They all had the divine spark.

Flood and Grattan, playing Shakespearian rôles in the charming country houses of the eighteenth century;—Curran, captivating the drawing-rooms and entrancing the cleverest men in Europe by his social grace and conversational brilliance at his table at The Priory;—O'Connell, in patriarchal simplicity joining in the festivities of his tenants on the lawn at Darrynane;—Sheil shivering in the dressing-room of Drury Lane awaiting the verdict of the monster, The Public, on his latest comedy;—Meagher, amid the shot and shell of Fredericksburg;—Butt, writing charming essays and fascinating the gay denizens of the Bohemia of London while fleeing the debt collector;—Parnell, riding to hounds and unlimbering among the boon companions at Aughavannagh, and trembling, boy-wise, before the mask of superstition—each and all of them were flesh and blood, virile, subject to lovable weaknesses while wearing the Olympian crown of genius. So great were they as men, mere men, that it were a pity to present them to posterity as steel engravings, or to hide their rare personalities in their political activities.

These men are to Ireland all that Plutarch's men were to Greece and Rome. Their eloquence and genius have served through more than a century to lift Ireland from the valley of her Gethsemane to illuminated heights where all the world can see and understand.

C. G. B.

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THE IRISH ORATORS

THE IRISH ORATORS

I

HENRY FLOOD

The Fight for the Control of the Purse-strings by the Irish Parliament; Beginnings of Systematic Corruption of Parliament; the Fight for Simple Repeal; the Story of the Volunteers; the Battle for Parliamentary Reform

THE period immediately preceding the activity of Dean Swift was one of utter darkness and hopelessness in Ireland. The parliament of the people—if such a parliament could be charged to any portion of the people—was verily a "den of thieves" where the interests of Ireland were sacrificed upon the altar of place and pelf. Without the walls of the parliament house, all was darkness. The people manifested not the slightest concern regarding the political policies through which they were governed. There was no such thing as public opinion; scarcely such a thing as a patriotic passion. Ireland was dormant and almost dead.

And then came Swift with his vitriolic pen to lash the rascals of the parliament house, to shame the people out of their apathy and to create a healthful public opinion upon which might have been built a militant patriotic party. But the death of the satirist left Ireland without a leader and she gradually fell into a

dismal drowse. The years that followed were dreary enough. The people themselves seemed to have lost all sense of self-respect. The dominating power across the channel treated them with the contempt which their indifference merited. The parliament became a mere toy—a plaything of the minister. It was reduced to utter impotency. Even the viceroy credited to Dublin disdained to dwell within the Castle, and, after a formal entry upon his duties, it was his custom to hurry back to the more congenial atmosphere of the court. However, he did not wholly neglect the government. He found his residential agents in members of parliament who came to be known as Undertakers from the fact that they stipulated, in consideration of pension and place and patronage, to undertake the business of carrying out the policies of the minister. In time the parliament degenerated into an insipid company of hucksters. No one cared to protest against the humiliation of the country. Not a voice was raised in behalf of the liberty of the land. The story of this period of Ireland is recorded on the most bleak and barren pages of her history.

At length—a miracle! A voice of protest within the house of commons awakened languid curiosity. The Undertakers yawned, stretched themselves and smiled. Occasionally this voice wavered and broke. This was reassuring. It made no impression upon the great inert mass without the halls of parliament. Within, it was as the voice of one crying in the wilderness and with no answer but a cry. It was the voice of Anthony Malone, perhaps the first great orator of Ireland, a man of marvelous mentality, amazing eloquence and unimpeachable integrity. Unfortunately

his great parliamentary speeches were delivered before the days of permanent records, and his reputation rests very largely upon the tributes of his contemporaries. Standing alone, he accomplished little. His methods were strictly constitutional and his admonitions were confined to the "den of thieves."

Then appeared—The Man.

One day during the closing period of the reign of George II, a brilliant and dashing young man of the aristocracy, whose eloquence suggested the commanding genius of Lord Chatham, took his seat in the Irish house of commons. He looked beyond the parliament house with its miserable pensioners and saw the people of Ireland sleeping in their chains. He had the audacity of an iconoclast. He determined to bring to bear upon the placemen of parliament the stinging lash of an aroused public opinion. He proposed a program of radical reforms. He urged it with an eloquence that shook the parliament and echoed across the channel where it beat against the walls of Saint Stephens. He reiterated it with such persistency that he disturbed the slumbers of the sleeping thousands and they awoke to a sense of their national humiliation and to a realization of their rights. He created public opinion —and through this he made a party, a party of virile opposition. This was the beginning of the nation. And this epic figure was the first of the heroic characters that have been fighting the battle of Irish independence up to the present hour. Mistakes he made, no doubt, and sometimes, alas, his course was tortuous and seemingly inconsistent, but in the history of Ireland few names will shine more luminously in the day of her triumph than that of Henry Flood.

I

It was in the sixteenth century that a gay and dashing ancestor of Henry Flood left his home in Kent, and, at the head of his troops, marched into Ireland and established a family. After the fashion of the invader he was soon numbered among the aristocracy. One of his sons became chief justice of the king's bench and lived the lordly life of a gentleman. Appreciating the privileges of an aristocrat he appears to have been a trifle unconventional in his wooing, and unfortunately, if tradition is to be credited, his first son, Henry Flood, born in 1732, made something of a premature appearance in the world. Being the only child and the heir to a great estate he was carefully trained to play his part becomingly in the fashionable world to which he was destined by birth. While his biographers are silent regarding his preliminary education, his admission to Trinity College in his sixteenth year justifies the assumption that it was thorough. Hardly had he settled down to his studies when his precocity manifested itself in a disposition to live up to the reputation of his ancestors, and we find him entering with the keenest zest into the fashions and frivolity of the capital, draining his cup with an abandon that would have reflected credit upon the founder of the Irish branch of the family. There was ample opportunity in the Dublin of those days for dissipation, and an early indication that the future orator's conception of education was that of a man of the world, impelled his father hurriedly to transfer him to Oxford, where temptations were not so alluring.

It was in the classic halls of the great university that

his ambition was aroused. He was fortunate in being placed under the supervision of Doctor Markham, afterward Archbishop of York, and during the two years of his life in Oxford he applied himself to his studies with the greatest diligence. While at Trinity he had found that his native ingenuity gave him an easy advantage over his fellow students and this had encouraged him to neglect his books. Nothing perhaps did more to wean him away from this dangerous tendency to rest upon his oars than his association with men of intellectual brilliancy at Oxford. We find him turning as if by instinct to such studies as were fitted to prepare him for public life. He turned eagerly to mathematics and the study of philosophy to stimulate his reasoning faculties. He became proficient in the classics. He translated the Greek and Roman poets and the masterpieces of the ancient orators. His favorite among the poets appears to have been Pindar, from whom he translated several odes. He pored over the histories of the ancient republics and became familiar with their struggles for liberty and the great characters who led and dominated their policies. In view of the frequent comparisons between the concise and nervous style which characterized him in the prime of his power and the style of Demosthenes it is interesting to know that he learned the oration on the *Crown* by heart. His efforts at composition during this period were not confined to prose. We have still extant several of his verses, but they contribute nothing to his fame. He appears to have left Oxford in his twenty-first year with a mind well stored and a style well formed for disputation.

Upon this graduation he entered the Temple to

study law, and, while his biographers rather depreciate his work here, some of his speeches in later years, in which he displayed a remarkable familiarity with the constitution and the fundamentals of jurisprudence, would indicate that the time devoted to the Temple was not entirely lost.

When after a seven years' sojourn in England he returned to his native isle and plunged precipitately into public life he faced a roseate future. His family position and his acquirements and convivial tastes would have made it an easy matter for him to have become one of the darlings of the Castle. He was a young man of striking appearance. His slender figure was exceedingly graceful and he had the manner of the polished courtier. His face, dominated by strong eagle-like eyes, was said to have been remarkably handsome. His conversational cleverness marked him for social distinction. His popularity was great with all classes, for, notwithstanding his aristocratic origin, he was always democratic in his manner and associations. And yet, withal, there was something of dignity about his bearing which set him apart from the crowd.

Such was Henry Flood when he entered the Irish house of commons in his twenty-seventh year as a member for Kilkenny. The situation confronting the ardent young statesman who had imbibed copiously of the lessons of Greek and Roman freedom must have seemed appalling. The country was in dire need of a popular constitution to define her rights. The parliament was absolutely powerless to act and was merely a parliament in name. Its principal function was to listen to the plausible address of the viceroy

and return a servile compliance in the lofty language of sycophancy. Its members might meet unmolested, might even venture to discuss the measures of the crown, and at times might even vote against them—but whatever it did was completely inoperative without the sanction of the power across the channel. No bill could have its origin in the Irish parliament until consent had been given by the deputy and the privy council. This toy law-making body was graciously accorded the privilege of submitting bills to its master which could be either wholly rejected or amended out of all recognition. Looking over the personnel of the body with which he was associated, Flood could find but one on whom he could rely in any attempt at reformation, and Anthony Malone was growing old and the fires of his genius that once burned so brightly were flickering now. True, Doctor Lucas had given unmistakable proof of a unique patriotism, but he was powerful only in the strength of the principles he proclaimed. The great mass of the members were pensioners, partakers of the bounty of the Castle, Undertakers in the shameful work of national humiliation.

The first four years of Flood's parliamentary career were barren of biographical data, since no attempt was made to report the debates until 1763. There are reasons to believe that Flood at first abstained from participation in the debates and devoted himself to a study of the usages of the house. His first appearance on the floor grew out of the motion that Portugal, then at war with Spain, be permitted to raise a regiment of Catholics in Ireland. In opposing the motion Flood made an eloquent and startlingly severe attack on the whole administration of the government and

called down upon his head the bitter resentment of the ministry while winning the approbation of the public. The first authentic record of his entrance into the debate was on October 12, 1763, when he stunned the house with a brilliant speech of sarcasm and invective aimed directly at the corruption of the members. This speech marked an epoch. Lucas had preached principles to ears of stone, and Malone had spoken of the principles of liberty to ears that refused to understand, but no one, up to this time, had dared stand in the Irish parliament and point an accusing finger at the fatal defect in the Irish institution. If this speech created concern among the beneficiaries of the "system," Flood's second philippic delivered less than a month afterward and directed at the pensioning policy of the Castle, caused something akin to consternation. It served notice on the government that in the eloquent young aristocrat it had found a man with whom it would have to reckon after a fashion then unknown in Irish administration.

Through the persistency of his opposition and the boldness of his assaults upon the corruption of the times, Flood gradually made inroads on the strength of the Undertakers, and created an interest in the proceedings of parliament on the part of the people. He soon established the reputation of being the most eloquent man that Ireland had produced. He had introduced into the Irish parliament that rhetorical eloquence which was then in full flower in Saint Stephens. He had created animosities on the part of the pensioners that pursued him through life and then persecuted his memory. During this period he made no effort to create a party. He was engaged in shattering

Henry Flood

Taken from a painting by Commerford in the possession of the University of Dublin

the power of the Undertakers and in arousing that public opinion upon which he was to lean so heavily in his battles of the future. He had made many ardent friends and admirers upon whom he could depend in any organized fight he might determine to make.

During these preliminary years he was diverted for a season from his parliamentary labor through his marriage to a lady of great fortune, and for a time he retired from politics and sought pleasure in agricultural pursuits at Farmley. This period was also a period of preparation. It gave him time for reflection and for the further cultivation of his natural and acquired talents. His home became the rendezvous of some of the most brilliant men that Ireland has produced. He surrounded himself with celebrities of the political and literary world and it is here that we first learn of his association with Henry Grattan and Sir Hercules Langrishe. A great intimacy grew up between them. They discussed politics and studied oratory as assiduously as youths, writing and exchanging their compositions for the purposes of criticism, and even entering into formal disputations after the manner of a debating society. No doubt the eloquence of these wonderful men which shone so brilliantly a few years later was burnished during these Attic nights and days in the rural seclusion of Farmley. And possibly something of grace and effectiveness was imparted to the dramatic phases of their delivery by the private theatricals with which they amused themselves. What a fascinating picture some artist would have handed down to posterity could he have caught them at the hour when Flood was playing Macbeth to Grattan's Macduff! The idyllic life at Farmley how-

ever could not continue long for one of Flood's nervous energy and feverish ambition, and he soon turned his back, a little sadly perhaps, but permanently, upon the joys of domesticity to plunge with renewed energy into the parliamentary battles of Dublin.

II

When the Marquis of Townsend was sent over to Ireland as viceroy in 1767, Henry Flood began his systematic agitation for the amelioration of the condition and the righting of the wrongs of his country. When the vain easy-going viceroy took up his residence at the Castle he was forty-three years old, and while he had had no political experience he had fought at Fontenoy, and had attempted, with some degree of success, to steal the laurels of Wolfe at the battle of Quebec. His family connections in England were the most distinguished. His intentions were probably the best. His very indifference to the dignity of his position gave promise of conciliating the masses, and his determination to make his home in Dublin, standing out in striking contrast to the policy of his predecessors, was expected to enhance his popularity. He was a man of the most convivial habits and in the Dublin of that day the heavy drinker had a certain advantage in society. Aside from an irritating tendency to scribble satires upon friend and foe alike there was very little about him, seen superficially, to justify the expectation that he would leave Ireland one of the most thoroughly hated rulers that ever occupied the Castle. The program that he was expected to carry out did not appear difficult of achievement by the ministry, since

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it embraced features that were expected to meet with the hearty approbation of the people. He proposed to augment the military establishment by increasing the number of soldiers from twelve thousand to fifteen thousand; to place the tenure of judges upon a constitutional basis, and to secure a limitation to the life of a parliament. A hasty survey of the field, however, soon convinced him that the governmental measures could not be carried without a struggle. The country was already sensitive on the subject of the army, and the aristocratic party, popularly known as the Undertakers, had found the continuation of a parliament throughout a reign highly profitable and satisfactory. In preparing to push the Augmentation bill, the marquis soon saw that unless he could conciliate the leading members of the aristocratic party he was doomed to failure; and it is claimed by J. R. Fisher, whose recent *History of the End of the Irish Parliament* is pronouncedly unfriendly to Flood, that the marquis entertained the hope of annexing the orator to the administration. Whatever grounds he may have had for the entertainment of this view of Flood, he soon found himself disillusioned in a manner that must have been maddening to one of his arbitrary disposition. It is true that in the beginning of the administration Flood had but very little to say, albeit his discontent was generally known.

The first act of the viceroy was to push for the passage of the Limitation bill, and in this he had the hearty cooperation of the orator, who had a program of his own which embraced this reform. It was not the first time this innovation had been proposed, and on several previous occasions the bill providing for the

limitation of the life of parliament had been passed by the Irish house of commons and promptly vetoed. When Townsend again asked for its consideration it was taken up with celerity and passed with practical unanimity. This was accomplished through the convergence of three powerful elements, no two of which were actuated by the same motives. The object of Townsend was to break the power of the aristocratic party, which, notwithstanding its corrupt and selfish tendencies bore some faint resemblance to a national party, to the end that he might more arbitrarily dominate from the Castle; the Undertakers voted for it in the firm expectation that it would again be rejected by the privy council; while Flood's idea was to make the house of commons more responsive to the public will by forcing it to renew itself at intervals through an appeal to the people. The Undertakers, who could easily have defeated the bill, soon found to their chagrin that they had taken their pitcher to the well once too often, for the privy council, no longer willing to bear the brunt of popular indignation, passed it on to England, where it was amended slightly and accepted. This miscalculation on the part of the Undertakers threw them into violent opposition and made possible the powerful consolidation of opposing interests which the organizing genius of Flood soon perfected.

It was immediately after this, when Townsend began to press for the passage of the Augmentation bill, that Henry Flood began to loom large in Irish affairs. Every effort was made by the government to meet the objections of the opposition, and it was agreed that Ireland should never again be denuded of troops, and that there should never be less than twelve thousand

retained without the explicit consent of the Irish parliament. The aristocratic party, however, was not to be conciliated by such concessions. Its resentment because of the passage of the Limitation bill had not died down. It was prepared to follow any leader into a general policy of opposition. Thus when Flood boldly pronounced against the increase in the number of troops and moved the rejection of the bill, the entire body of the Undertakers fell in behind him and the government was overwhelmingly defeated.

Because of this connection between the corruptionists of the aristocratic party and Flood, it has been the policy of English historians to ascribe to the orator the same base motives that controlled the Undertakers. Nothing could be more unjust. At the beginning of the Townsend régime Flood formulated a patriotic program providing for the limitations of the life of parliament, the reduction of the pension list, the establishment of a national militia, and the complete legislative independence of Ireland. Never for a moment, while Townsend held office, did the patriotic leader waver in his determination to give practical effect to his program, and it would have been the acme of asininity for him to have refused the cooperation of the Undertakers, no matter how unworthy their motives. The cause he espoused was good. It was nothing less than the cause of Ireland. The accomplishment of his purpose would undoubtedly have redounded to the benefit of the nation. He found himself a member of a legislative body that was literally honeycombed with corruption, and utterly helpless to get results without the support of men of low political ethics. The members of the house who were above approach, were in a

miserable minority, and, like the practical politician that he was, he built up, for the first time, a real party of opposition through which he was enabled to accomplish infinite good. We shall find later on that this alliance was merely temporary and that Flood and his allies were as wide apart as the poles in their conception of patriotic duty.

Infuriated by the frustration of his plans, the irate Townsend demanded the immediate dissolution of parliament, and began to lay his lines to break the power of the aristocratic party in the elections. During the interval, he resorted to every method at his command to bring in a government majority. Peers were created, special favors were bestowed, and the functions of his office were shamelessly prostituted to the purchase of support. It appears that he looked forward with confidence to the new parliament which convened in October, 1769, but he soon found himself sadly at sea. In his letters of this period we find him complaining of the cold and distant attitude of the parliamentary leaders and their contemptuous treatment of his office. Thoroughly aroused, he determined to resort to intimidation, and men holding government positions were called to the Castle and threatened with dismissal in the event they failed to support government measures. These men, still smarting under the recollection of the Limitation bill, listened coldly and made no promises.

The test of strength came with the effort to pass the Money bill. It had long been the desire of the house to obtain for parliament a complete control over the purse, and there had been a growing resentment of the policy of altering money bills in England. The Money

bill of 1769 originated, as usual, in the privy council and was sent down to the house for ratification. The moment it was read, Henry Flood, now the acknowledged head of the opposition to the government, promptly rose in his place and moved the rejection of the bill on the ground that it had not originated with the members of the house, and without further discussion it was defeated. Then, as a manifestation of loyalty to the crown, the house voted large supplies and passed the Augmentation bill.

This was the first open declaration of war on a fundamental or constitutional principle—and the battle for Irish independence has been on from that hour to this.

The blow was a severe one, and Townsend, wild with indignation, hurried down to the house, and after delivering an abusive harangue, he prorogued the parliament regardless of the fact that much important public business was pending.

Never before had the Irish people been so thoroughly stirred as during the fourteen months that intervened before parliament was again called together. The bold manner in which Flood had defied authority; the publicity that he had succeeded in giving to his program of reform, the arbitrary manner in which the viceroy had dismissed the representatives of the nation, all conspired to create an instrumentality of power that had not existed since the death of Swift—a virile, enlightened, public opinion. It was to this that Flood now turned his attention, and we shall find that throughout his subsequent career, it was upon this that he depended. He knew as well as the modern English historians, the miserable character of the per-

sonnel of the opposition he had consolidated. He knew the power of pensions and of patronage in cutting the ground from under him within the house of commons. He doubtless had a profound contempt for the average member of parliament. His plan, therefore, was to strengthen himself and the patriotic party, by bringing an enlightened and determined public opinion to bear upon the "den of thieves." And in this work he had as collaborators none less than Henry Grattan and Sir Hercules Langrishe.

About this time a famous series of satirical letters began to appear in *The Freeman,* the bitterness and brilliancy of which soon made a deep impression upon the country. We are interested especially in the contributions of Flood. In looking over them in this day of moderation one is instantly impressed with the ferocity of the attacks. He used the meat ax rather than the sword.

However while Flood and his followers were busily engaged in organizing, through their satires, an enlightened public opinion against the viceroy, the interval preceding the parliament of 1771 was utilized by Townsend in buying government support with the means at his command. It is said that not less than half a million was spent in rounding up a government majority. Peerages, pensions, places, promises, intimidations, were marshaled by the viceroy into an invincible army of defense, and when parliament met Townsend felt assured of easy sailing. This sense of jubilation was accentuated by the action of the house in proposing and passing a congratulatory address to the viceroy. This act of sycophancy was not permitted to go unopposed however, and again we find

Flood meeting with spirit his obligations as a leader of opposition by assailing the proposal with an audacity then unique in Irish politics. His general style of aiming directly at the bull's eye was not set aside in this instance, as shown by his personal attack upon Lord Townsend:

"I am not in any wise amazed," he said, "that those who are under obligations to Lord Townsend should attempt to defend his conduct. Gratitude exacts this duty from them, and the debt, though paid at the expense of their integrity, yet the justice of this private virtue may seemingly account for; but as I am under no such compliment to that noble lord I will speak my thoughts with freedom and express my sentiments unawed. For my part, I have ever opposed the administration of Lord Townsend, not from personal pique or private spleen, but from a manifest, from a warranted conviction that he had acted wrong. I have, since the opening of the session, rather been silent on his conduct, because I wished those wounds which he gave my country might be healed, and that a name so hateful to the virtuous part of this house might be buried in oblivion. But when I find unmerited applause bestowed, unjust panegyric given, and that he who deserves the severest censure is adorned with laurels, I can not patiently sit, and silently listen. A gentleman on my left (Mr. Agar) has called the noble lord to order because he has dared to speak against his patron. Who was it first began the theme? I appeal to the house if from the government side the altercation did not originate. An honorable member opposite me first mentioned Lord Townsend; I did not; nor did any of my friends; they brought him forward and are answerable for what has been or what may be said of him. It has been observed in this now absent lord's praise that the most salutary laws we ever experienced owed their enactment to him. I deny it. I speak with confidence, nor am I apt to tell untruths. The Lim-

itation bill, which has been so loudly echoed as his deed, he derives not the slightest merit from. It was I who first gave the assisting hand to that excellent law; nor am I ashamed to pay myself the compliment; for honest fame is the just reward of an upright heart, and I am not averse to the gift. I followed the bill to the other side, and when it was the doubt of the minister whether it should pass, I told him the arguments that were its foundation; in this I was backed by Lord Chatham, and the minister allowed them unanswerable. I therefore do aver that from this transaction Lord Townsend can not expect the shadow of honor. I speak truly for I am afraid of no man. I seek no favor but the applause that may flow from performing my duty. I am under no obligations to this or that viceroy: and I believe I may say that I rejected proffered benefits. I shall now only remark that from every observation I could make—Lord Townsend acted as an enemy, to our country, to our constitution, and our liberties; for which reason, instead of panegyric, he should, by every real friend of Ireland, be treated as a public malefactor."

It was through the use of such language that Flood, during the whole of the Townsend administration became as much of a terror to the corruptionists of Ireland as Chatham had been to those of the days of Walpole across the channel. The speech just quoted did not prevent the passage of the address, but it did have a demoralizing effect upon the Castle minions to whom it brought the realization that Flood proposed to continue the struggle and to expose to the public the mercenaries of the viceroy. During the first few days of the session all the divisions were carried by the government, but when the altered Money bill was brought in and Flood led another fight against it on the ground that it did not originate in the house, he

led a triumphant army, enough of the bought and paid for members coming over to prevent its acceptance.

It was at this juncture that Townsend, now thoroughly desperate, proposed to increase the membership of the Commission of Revenue, who sat in the house of commons, from seven to twelve with the view to adding five government supporters; and when Flood moved the rejection of the proposal on the ground that seven were sufficient, the viceroy decided to force the fighting by increasing the membership without the consent of parliament. This aroused the country to a white heat of indignation. The constant agitation of Flood had prepared the nation for just such a reception of such news. The unpopularity of Townsend grew apace. And when the house passed several votes of censure upon the viceroy because of his official conduct, Townsend, in unutterable disgust, threw up his office, and indignantly returned to England.

At this time Henry Flood stood upon the pinnacle of his glory. No man in the history of Ireland had ever before been able to wield such power. His eloquence, surpassing that of any other man his country had brought forth, had made him the popular idol. No greater master of parliamentary tactics had ever occupied a seat in the house. Regardless of the poor quality of material at hand, he had built up for the first time an organized and definite opposition to the government. He had aroused in the people an interest in parliamentary discussions and the proceedings of the house that had never before existed. He had given proof of statesmanlike qualities by placing before the nation a definite program and he had forced the consummation of a portion of his plans. Without

an office, he had unhorsed a viceroy and made his name familiar not only in Ireland, but in the ministerial conferences of London. And when in 1772 he paid a visit to London to urge upon Lord North the commercial rights of Ireland and the necessity for an absentee tax, he was received with marked respect by the leading men of the empire. Had he passed from the scene at this time his course would have appeared, to posterity, consistent throughout.

III

When Lord Harcourt went over to Ireland to take up the work abandoned by Townsend it was with the intention of winning by conciliation. The pictures we have of this nobleman are not such as to justify the least expectation of brilliant success. He had served as ambassador at Versailles, where he had become adept in the gentle art of kissing milady's hand, an art not especially useful in Dublin Castle. He appears to have been an easy-going, conciliatory, well-meaning sort of man of colorless character, who soon found it to his pleasure to leave the prosy duties of his position to Blanquiere, the secretary, whose amazing capacity for the consumption of liquor, and tact in cultivating the house of commons were expected to popularize the administration and smooth away the rough places in the road. The one ambition of the new viceroy, in which he appears to have taken a genuine interest, was to conciliate and capture Henry Flood.

In the early days of the Harcourt administration we find the conduct of Flood to be such as to have caused considerable concern to his real friends. In

common with all the leaders of opposition he attended the first levee at the Castle and manifested a friendly feeling for the new viceroy. This was followed by peculiar action in the house. It appears that he supported the government from the beginning, albeit at first in an entirely independent manner. At times his absence from the house attracted unfavorable comment, especially when the interests of his country demanded his presence. The absence and indifference of the leader had its inevitable effect upon the army and it fell into a state of utter demoralization. His friends became alarmed. Lord Charlemont, the most devoted friend he ever had, appears to have remonstrated with him earnestly and without effect. Finally he accepted office under Harcourt, taking the lucrative position of vice-treasurer of Ireland with a seat in the privy council. Henceforth during the remainder of the Harcourt régime he was silent for the most part and pitifully evasive when he was not silent. This injects the one big interrogation point into his career. Was he a traitor to his country, or was he true to himself?

It has been the contention of Flood's admirers that he was amply justified in accepting office. The most damaging evidence against him is to be found in the correspondence of government officials during that period. In *The End of the Irish Parliament,* Mr. Fisher has made out a pretty strong case for the plaintiff. There seems to be no doubt but that Harcourt authorized Blanquiere to find an office of sufficient importance to satisfy Flood and that there was a long delay in the matter due in part to the unfriendly attitude of the secretary toward the orator. It is now established that Flood was in complete accord with the

arrangement and that he looked longingly toward the very important position of provost of Trinity College. His failure to get this place appears to have soured him, and if we are to credit the letters of Harcourt, he became very insistent upon recognition. In one of his letters to England written at this time Harcourt says:

"Mr. Flood is greatly offended. I saw him yesterday and he complained most bitterly. He took occasion to put forth his important services which he thought justly entitled him to preferment which had been given to Mr. Hutchinson (provost of Trinity) without even making him a tender of it. He laid great stress upon the difficulties and obstructions he could have thrown in the way had he been disposed to be adverse."

This is inconsistent with the idea that he was "pressed" to take office. It indicates, rather, that he not only had reached a groveling and whining stage but that he was not above a certain kind of blackmail. About this time he indicated to Harcourt that he was "done with the Castle" and complained that it was "humiliating for a patriot to lose his reputation by deserting to the government and then fail to get a place." The viceroy appealed to London for assistance and Lord North, who sympathized with his embarrassment, suggested reviving the position of president of Munster, with no duties and an attractive salary, but Harcourt rejected the suggestion and insisted upon one of the three vice-treasurerships which had always gone to Englishmen and were desired by North for his own friends. At length, however, North yielded to the importunities of the viceroy and the offer was made to the now irritated Flood. "The acquisition of

Mr. Flood, circumstanced as things are," wrote Harcourt to North, "can not be purchased at too dear a price." When the proposition was made, Flood, now grown peevish by the long delay in the negotiations, at first refused; then he agreed to accept provided the salary should be thrown upon England rather than Ireland; and finally he accepted unconditionally.

"Since I was born," wrote the easy-going Harcourt, "I never had to deal with so difficult a man, owing principally to his high-strained ideas of his own influence and popularity." The evidence of Flood's unpopularity with the government is not confined by any means to the above quotation. In the alphabetical list of members of the house, prepared by the secretary, we find the following unfavorable description of Flood opposite his name: "Formerly engineer and mouthpiece of the opposition. Impractical in his conduct in parliament, in private life held in abhorrence and detestation by all men of integrity and truth. When Lord Harcourt arrived Flood affected candor and promised support. Upon some important questions he supported; upon others, equally material to government, he kept away. In consequence of this conduct a promise of some considerable employment was held out to him."

Still another side-light on Harcourt's attitude toward him is found in the trick played him in connection with the viceroy's proposal to raise money for the government by taxing the rents of absentee landlords. This proposal encountered the most acrimonious opposition in England, and Burke drew up, on behalf of the Whigs, a strong remonstrance which convinced the government of the necessity of abandoning the meas-

ure. The problem was how to kill it without embarrassment to the viceroy. In one of his letters of this period Harcourt writes that "a certain wild, inconsistent gentleman will be put up in the house to propose it and that will be sufficient to damn it." The "wild, inconsistent gentleman" was Flood! He had always been a consistent advocate of an absentee tax, and the passage of such a measure by the Harcourt administration would furnish a plausible excuse for accepting office under it. The probability is that he knew nothing of the treachery of Harcourt and it is certain that he spoke in favor of the tax with surpassing brilliancy. Harcourt, writing of this speech says: "Mr. Flood was violent and able in behalf of the measure in a degree almost surpassing everything he has ever uttered before."

On the part of the defense much of a plausible nature has been written by friendly historians. The point is made that Flood had only found an opposition party of effective force possible through the temporary alliance with the Undertakers whose disrelish for Townsend did not extend to the new viceroy. Certain it is that the moment Harcourt appeared the Undertakers who had affiliated with Flood were quick to make their peace with the new officials. With an adequate opposition impossible in the house and without sufficient support from public opinion without, Flood concluded that the patriotic thing to do would be to go inside the government and do the best possible for the country. The claim is made that Flood, knowing something of the easy-going character of Harcourt, believed that within a short time he would be able to dominate the government from within. In the early

days of the administration several concessions were made that are ascribed by the admirers of Flood to his presence in the privy council. The commissioners of revenue on which he had fought Townsend were abolished, and the boards of customs and excise which had been divided against Flood's opposition were reunited. The public at large had every reason to believe that Harcourt had sincerely supported the absentee tax for which Flood had fought from his entrance in public life. Some commercial restrictions opposed by Flood were removed, and a bounty on the export of Irish corn, advocated by Flood, was carried. Flood always contended in later life that he had exerted himself to the utmost while a member of the privy council to give a liberal trend to the administration.

As a set-off to the good accomplished by the Harcourt régime through the probable influence of Flood many unpopular features developed for which he had to share responsibility. The most unfortunate of these perhaps was the action of the Irish government in authorizing the contribution of troops to aid in putting down the American colonies. The admirers of Flood will always regret that he threw himself so zealously into the fight against the colonies. He appears to have become an ardent champion of the empire at this juncture and in his speeches he impressively warned the government that if the colonies should be permitted their freedom "destruction will come upon the British empire like the coldness of death, will creep upon it from the extreme parts." He gave a rather fantastic description of the troops to be sent from Ireland. They were to go as "armed negotiators,"

Flood's speech against the Americans was described by Harcourt as "great and able."

When in 1776 Harcourt retired and was succeeded by the Earl of Buckinghamshire, Flood continued in office, although he appears to have found the governmental atmosphere less congenial. He complained that he was being treated as a "mere placeman," and he began to absent himself more and more from the privy council. Notwithstanding his dissatisfaction he continued in office, though he sat in his seat in the house silent, morose and disappointed.

When parliament met in 1779 the condition of Ireland was all but desperate, as a result of the embargo, and after a series of meetings throughout the country where demands were made for free trade, Grattan moved an amendment to the address concluding with the demand for "free exports." During the course of the discussion Flood manifested the keenest interest, and his suggestion that the words "free trade" be substituted for "free exports" was adopted and carried with the aid of his vote. This was the most serious defection the government had encountered and it made the position of Flood in office scarcely more tenable. However, he continued to hold on, while allying himself more and more with the opposition to measures of vital importance, until 1780 when the government manifested its displeasure by dismissing him from the privy council.

This marks the end of the most unsatisfactory period in the long career of Henry Flood. In concluding this portion of his life it is but fair to record his own explanation of his course during the Harcourt and Buckingham administrations, offered in his mas-

terful defense of his political life in reply to the attack by Henry Grattan.

"I come now," he said, "to the period in which Lord Harcourt governed, and which is stigmatized by the word 'venal.' If every man who accepts an office is venal and an apostate, I certainly can not acquit myself of the charge, nor is it necessary. If it be a crime universally, let it be universally ascribed; but it is not fair that one set of men should be treated by that honorable member as great friends and lovers of their country, notwithstanding they are in office, and another set of men should be treated as enemies and apostates. What is the truth? Everything of this sort depends on the principles on which the office is taken, and on which it is retained. With regard to myself let no man imagine I am preaching up a doctrine for my own convenience; there is no man in this house less concerned in the propagation of it. I beg leave to state briefly the manner in which I accepted the vice-treasurership:

"It was offered me in the most honorable manner, with the assurance not only of being a placeman for my own profit, but a minister for the benefit of my country. My answer was that I thought in a constitution such as the British an intercourse between the prince and the subject ought to be honorable. The circumstances of being a minister ought to redound to a man's credit, though I lament to say it often happens otherwise; men in office frequently forget those principles which they maintained before. I mentioned the public principles which I held, and added, if consistently with them, from an atom of which I could not depart, I could be of service to his majesty's government, I was ready to render it. I now speak in the presence of men who know what I say. After the appointment had come over to this kingdom, I sent in writing to the chief governor that I could not accept it unless on my own stipulations. Thus, sir, I took office. . . .

"In Lord Harcourt's administration what did I do?

I had the board of commissioners reduced to one, by which a saving of twenty thousand pounds a year was effected. I went further, I insisted on having every altered money bill thrown out, and privy council bills not defended by the crown. Thus, instead of giving sanction to the measures I had opposed, my conduct was in fact to register my principles in the records of the court—to make the privy council witness the privileges of the parliament and give final energy to the tenets with which I commenced my public life. The right honorable member who has censured me, in order to deprecate that economy, said that 'we have swept with the feather of economy the pens and papers off our table'—a pointed and brilliant expression which is far from a just argument. This country had no reason to be ashamed of that species of economy, when the great nation of Britain had been obliged to descend to a system as minute; it was not my fault if infinitely more was not done. If administrations were wrong on the absentee tax, they were wrong with the prejudices of half a century—they were wrong with every great writer who has treated of Irish affairs. . . . To show that I was not under any undue influence of office, when the disposition of the house was made to alter on the absentee tax, and when the administration yielded to the violence of parliament, I appeal to the consciousness and public testimony of many present whether I did veer and turn with the secretary, or whether I did not make a manly stand in its favor. After having pledged myself to the public I would rather break with a million administrations than retract; I not only adhered to that principle, but, by a singular instance of exertion, found it a second time under the consideration of this house."

Upon this, his own defense, the admirers and defenders of Flood rest their case. It is more agreeable to accept it. It is pleasant to turn now to contemplate him once more in the more heroic rôle of opposition.

IV

On separating himself from the service of the government it is probable that Flood expected to resume his old place as the leader, and acknowledged leader, of the opposition, but he soon realized with bitterness that during his association with the Castle others had supplanted him in his old rôle. Among the underlings of the Castle he was thoroughly hated for what they termed his apostacy, while the opposition members either distrusted the sincerity of his reversion or feared that he could displace them in the position of leadership. He found himself literally without friends in the house. Several incidents have been recorded by historians illustrative of the treatment accorded to him. In 1779, in supporting Yelverton's motion for the repeal of Poyning's law, he complained that "after twenty years of service in the study of this particular question" he had been superseded, and added: "The honorable gentleman is erecting a temple to liberty. I hope that I at least shall be allowed a niche in the fane." It was in response to this that Yelverton made his famous retort: "If a man should separate from his wife, desert, and abandon her for seven years, another may take her and give her protection."

Such was the state of feeling when the fight on the question of simple repeal was precipitated by Flood and the stage was set for the final and dramatic break between the two great orators and patriot leaders who had studied their art together years ago in the classic seclusion of Farmley. The conditions at the time were auspicious for a strike for Irish independence. England was engaged in her struggle with the colonies.

The people of Ireland, left without adequate protection from French invasion, had taken upon themselves the defense of their homes, and as if by magic the Volunteers of Ireland—one hundred thousand armed men—sprang into existence. Had this armed force taken advantage of that opportunity Ireland might easily have repeated the performance of the Americans, and the ministers lived in extreme dread of the possibility. At this juncture Grattan moved his Declaration of Rights, which was adopted by the house, which afterward marched in procession between the Volunteers who lined the streets, to the Castle and presented its demands. The demands of Ireland were promptly and without qualification conceded by the ministers. In a moment of jubilation Grattan rose and moved an address of satisfaction and gratitude in which he insisted that to ask anything further would be foolish and unreasonable caution. He was completely satisfied with the English recognition of the independence of the Irish parliament. He hoped that the concession would also satisfy the Volunteers and they would promptly disband. In this he was doomed to disappointment.

The unpopularity of Flood in the house did not extend to the general public, where he was extraordinarily popular and especially with the Volunteers, and when he startled the house by standing forth in a militant patriotism, and warned the country that the mere repeal of the Declaration Act would not suffice and that nothing less than an express act of the English parliament renouncing for all time the right to legislate for Ireland could be accepted he struck the popular chord. His militant attitude aroused the greatest en-

thusiasm among the Volunteers. The Lawyers' Corps of the organization passed resolutions favorable to his contention. The Belfast Volunteers hailed him as the legitimate head of the patriot movement in a letter to him urging him to take the lead. "Your unquestioned abilities," they said, "your unrivaled eloquence, your knowledge which seems bounded only by the limits which the author of our nature has inscribed for our kind, and the sacrifice you have made to serve your country, oblige us to look up to you as one of the first of men." In his reply Flood proffered his services and the fight was on.

The following incidents enter into the most dramatic and inspiring period in Flood's career. The house was predisposed against him and the ministers looked upon his demand as revolutionary. Earl Temple, then viceroy, writing to England, declared that the concession of the demands would "close the account forever between the two kingdoms." But the country, seething with patriotic passion, was with Flood, and the ominous armed men, ready to spring at the word, were with him. Within six weeks after writing the warning to England just quoted, Temple was as firmly convinced that England's only safety lay in the surrender to Flood's demands. During the interval a decision in an Irish case had been rendered by Lord Mansfield which conclusively demonstrated the correctness of Flood's contention, and like the practical politician that he was, the orator made the best possible use of it in the agitation he was directing without the walls of parliament. From his place in the house Flood led the fight in speeches of unanswerable eloquence and in words of Chatham-like defiance.

"Ireland is an independent kingdom," he declared. "She has a completely free and supreme legislature of her own, and has accordingly a full right to enter into commerce, and conclude treaties with every nation on the globe. Here I set my foot; can any man deny—can any man controvert this position? I call upon the host of crown lawyers. Can even the representative of administration deny it? He dares not; and his silence I interpret into acquiescence. If any man will undertake to refute this position with proofs, I will listen to him; but if any shall adduce mere arguments and opinions, I am ready to lacerate and explode them."

Emboldened by the consciousness of the strength of his position he burst forth in the following passage of revolutionary fire:

"Our liberties were first infringed by the detestable Stafford, but the cries of this oppressed country have pursued and overtaken him; and I earnestly pray that a like vengeance may light upon every future tyrant who shall attack the constitution with the high hand of prerogative, or the slower sap of corruption."

Turning to the followers of Grattan and charging them with a willingness to accept half-way measures he said:

"What is the use of a charter but to defend the rights of the people against arbitrary power?—a half assertion of your rights will never do. I would not leave an atom of power in an arbitrary council, either English or Irish; legislation does not belong to them; nor can you ever have a safe constitution while they interfere. You can not raise a structure of adamant on a foundation of sand."

The conclusions of his speeches reached the highest eloquence and made a profound impression on the house:

"And now, Mr. Speaker, if I have a feeling in the inmost pulse of my heart it is that which tells me that this is a great and awful day: it is that which tells me that if after twenty years' service I shall pass this question by neglectingly, I shall be a base betrayer of my country: it is that which tells me that the whole earth does not contain a bribe sufficient to make me trifle with the liberties of this land. I do therefore wish to subscribe my name to that which I now propose, and to have it handed down to posterity, that posterity may know that there was at least one man who disapproved of the temporizing bill now before the house—a bill that future parliaments, if they have power, will reform—if they have not, with tears will deplore. . . .

"Were the voice with which I now utter this the last effort of expiring nature; were the accent which conveys it to you the breath that was to waft me to that grave to which we all tend, and to which my footsteps rapidly accelerate, I would go on, I would make my exit by a loud demand for your rights; and I call upon the God of truth and liberty, who has so often favored you, and who has of late looked down upon you with such a peculiar grace and glory of protection, to continue to you His inspirings, to crown you with the spirit of His completion, and to assist you against the errors of those who are honest, as well as against the machinations of those who are not."

Backed as he was by the public opinion he had aroused and by the support of the Volunteers he forced the house to his way of thinking and won a complete victory which was duly ratified by the reluctant power across the channel. At the conclusion of this fight he

had reached a greater degree of popularity and power than he had possessed before. The envious within the house were completely disarmed. Flood had found himself again.

The feeling between Flood and Grattan in the meanwhile had been growing tense, and more particularly on the part of the younger man. At length the storm broke. The pretext for the quarrel came in a harmless motion of Sir H. Cavendish, to which an amendment was proposed by Flood. The incident reflects no great credit upon either man. The exchange of philippics while reflecting the oratorical brilliancy of the leaders might profitably be forgotten by the admirers of each. The quarrel seems to have been sought on the part of Grattan, whose first speech appears to have been carefully prepared. With great dexterity Grattan played upon the weak points in Flood's career, but the severity of his language and the ferocity of his assault were scarcely justified by the facts. A duel was narrowly averted. A little later the house granted Flood an opportunity for the delivery of the elaborate and conclusive defense from which a quotation has been given, and when at the conclusion Grattan rose to renew the quarrel, the house manifested its satisfaction with Flood's explanation and its disapprobation of Grattan's attitude by adjourning and refusing to hear him. The attack did not materially injure Flood at the time and public sympathy seems to have been largely with him. Even the king, speaking to the Duke of Chandos at a levee, expressed his amazement at the action of Grattan. In the years that followed Flood also appears in a better and broader light. On one occasion he saluted Grat-

tan in passing, but the salute being ignored he never again made an attempt at conciliation, although he was big enough to preside at several meetings where complimentary resolutions were passed upon the work of his rival. Unfortunately, however, the fame of Flood has suffered in the transmission of Grattan's wonderful invective to posterity which is too generally accepted at its face value by the superficial reader of Irish history. It did not injure him with the Volunteers, however, as we shall see.

V

It was inevitable that Flood's victory in the renunciation action should have created immense enthusiasm among the Volunteers and impelled them to push forward to greater triumphs. Even the attack of Grattan failed to diminish one whit the loyalty of the citizen-soldiery and we find the Belfast Volunteers, after the attack, writing him:

"Persevere, sir. Continue to exert your unequalled abilities in fixing the internal constitution of this kingdom on a permanent and solid foundation. The voice of the people is your support, and the voice of the people must be attended to. It is the purity of the constitution that gives our country the preference to another, and marks the genius of the inhabitants in a most distinguishing manner. We hope the period is drawing nigh when the senate will speak the wishes of the people, and when our liberty shall be complete."

The meaning of this was soon manifest in the determination of the Volunteers to press upon parliament the passage of a parliamentary reform bill and an

Irish bill of rights. Meanwhile Portland, the prime minister, and the new viceroy, thoroughly concerned on account of the Volunteers, were working on a plan for forming "fencible regiments" to take the place of the Volunteers. The reception of this news by the citizen-soldiery can readily be imagined. Galway, Belfast, Cork protested against the substitution of what they termed "mercenaries." The feeling became so bitter that the Belfast company at a banquet drank a toast—"May the fencibles and their friends never enjoy the benefits of freedom; May Ireland never want hemp to exalt all fencible commanders who deserve it." This defiant attitude still further intensified the fear of the ministry and about this time we find Fox writing to poor Northington, the viceroy, demanding all sorts of impossible things looking toward the curbing of the ominous organization. It is interesting to know that Grattan and Lord Charlemont, the most distinguished leader of the Volunteer movement, were in complete accord with the wishes of Fox and Northington while Flood did all within his power to encourage the aggressiveness of the citizen-soldiers.

When the new parliament was called for October the Volunteers, having had preliminary meetings, determined to hold a convention in Dublin at the same time and to sit simultaneously with the house of commons. This smacked of revolution. It suggested the divided authority of the early days of the French Revolution. It meant Grattan's parliament against Flood's Volunteers. The American war having come to a disastrous conclusion, twelve thousand veteran soldiers were hurried into Ireland under the command of General Burgoyne, and it is significant that Flood did all

within his power to reduce their number under the pretense of retrenchment.

The opening of the Volunteers' convention was highly spectacular owing to the dramatic entrance to the city of the Earl Bishop of Derry, who was ambitious to dominate and head the soldiery for reasons that historians have concluded were revolutionary. This peculiar character, churchman and libertine in one, was an ostentatious dandy. He entered the city drawn by six prancing horses gaily garbed and accompanied by two brilliantly uniformed squadrons of Volunteers. Reaching the parliament house, the members came out to pay their respects. The bishop saluted triumphantly, the bugle sounded, the band played and the procession moved on. In the light of what we now know it is possible that something serious might have resulted from the convention but for the prominence of the part played by the bishop. Men having no sympathy with the convention but having a right to membership entered with the sole purpose of curbing the Bishop of Derry and creating discord in the ranks through the precipitation of a religious question. As it was, a committee was appointed to draw up a reform bill, which confined the franchise to Protestants, and Henry Flood was selected to present it to the house of commons.

On the night of its presentation Dublin was seething with excitement. The feeling prevailed that the contest between the convention and parliament was on. The galleries of the house were packed, and largely with the sympathizers of the Volunteers. The members of the convention who were also members of the house determined to march from the convention to the

house in the uniforms of the Volunteers with no less a personage than Henry Flood at the head of the procession.

When Flood rose pandemonium broke loose in the galleries. It must have been the proudest moment of his life. As he glanced over the house which had done all within its power to accomplish his humiliation and realized that his popularity with the people had never attained such heights before, it must have been with something of jubilation and haughtiness of spirit that he claimed the attention of the chair. There he stood—a magnificent and handsome figure arrayed in the uniform of the citizen-soldier, his eyes flashing fire, his manner kingly, feeling no doubt that he bore to a reluctant and unworthy assembly the message of a sovereign people. The galleries shouted encouragement. The convention was still sitting. Burgoyne's men were prepared for any emergency that might arise. Then Yelverton, the spokesman of the house, haughtily refused even to consider the bill on the ground that it was presented at the point of the bayonet. In his opening speech Flood had carefully refrained from mentioning the Volunteers or the convention, but when the citizen-soldiers were thus decried by Yelverton, he boldly launched forth in reply in his now famous defense of the Volunteers:

"Sir, I have not mentioned the bill as being the measure of any set of men or body of men whatsoever. I am as free to enter into a discussion of the bill as any gentleman in this house, and with as little prepossession of what I shall propose. I refer it to the house as the bill of my right honorable friend who seconded me—will you receive it from us?

"In the last parliament it was ordered, 'That leave be given for more equal representation of the people in parliament;' this was in the Duke of Portland's administration, an administration the right honorable gentleman (Yelverton) professes to admire, and which he will not suspect of overturning the constitution.

"I own, from the turn which has been given to this question, I enter on it with the deepest anxiety; armed with the authority of a precedent, I did not think that any one would be so desperate as to give such violent opposition to the simple introduction of a bill. I now rise to speak to the subject, and I call on every man, auditor or spectator, in the house or in the galleries, to remember this truth—that if the Volunteers are introduced in this debate, it is not I who do so. The right honorable gentleman says, 'if the Volunteers have approved it he will oppose it;' but I say I bring it in as a member of this house supported by the powerful aid of my right honorable friend (Mr. Brownlow) who sits behind me. We bring it in as members of parliament, not mentioning the Volunteers. I ask you, will you receive it from us—from us, your members, neither intending by anything within doors or without to intimidate or overawe you? I ask, will you—will you receive it as our bill, or will you conjure up a military phantom of interposition to affright you?

"I have not introduced the Volunteers, but if they are aspersed, I will defend their character against all the world. By whom were the commerce and constitution of this country recovered? By the Volunteers.

"Why did not the right honorable gentleman make a declaration against them when they lined our streets —when parliament passed through the ranks of those virtuous armed men to demand the rights of an insulted nation? Are they different men at this time, or is the right honorable gentleman different? He was then one of their body, he is now their accuser. He who saw the streets lined, who rejoiced, who partook in their glory, is now their accuser. Are they less wise, less

brave, less ardent in their country's cause, or has their admirable conduct made him their enemy? May they not say, we have not changed, but you have changed? The right honorable gentleman can not bear to hear of Volunteers; but I will ask him, and I will have a starling taught to haloo in his ear—Who gave you the free trade? Who got you the free constitution? Who made you a nation? The Volunteers.

"If they were the men you now describe them, why did you accept of their service? Why did you not then accuse them? If they were so dangerous, why did you pass through their ranks with your speaker at your head to demand a constitution? Why did you not then fear the ills you now apprehend?"

In the debate that ensued, one of the most exciting in the history of the Irish parliament, Flood stood his ground, haughtily voicing the demands of the nation, while epithets like "armed demagogues" were rained upon him by many who must a little later have had cause to wonder whether he had not been the one foreseeing man in the house. It was three o'clock in the morning when the vote came and in the midst of turmoil the fight of the Volunteers was lost by a great majority.

The following year Flood again introduced the bill when the Volunteers were not in session to overawe an Irish parliament and when the most timid of Irish statesmen must have felt perfectly safe under the guardianship of the English soldiery. Addresses in favor of the measure poured in from every section of the country. The speech of Flood was one of his most brilliant, but, after a prolonged debate, it was defeated about three o'clock on a Sunday morning by a majority of seventy-four. With this defeat Flood

lost all confidence in the Irish parliament and all hope of protecting his country in that quarter and a little later we find him abandoning the lawmakers of Dublin to sit in the English house of commons.

It has been a puzzle to the historians to know whether or not Flood entertained revolutionary designs. It is quite probable that, knowing the character of the parliament as he did, he felt that nothing vital could be accomplished unless the members should be overawed by some force outside the walls, and that he was willing to resort to an unconstitutional method of procedure to attain a patriotic purpose. That others in later years recognized his wisdom is manifest in the question of Curran on the night of the destruction of the legislative independence of Ireland when he turned sadly to a companion and asked, "Where now are your one hundred thousand men?" Whatever may be thought of Flood's connection with the Harcourt administration one thing must be conceded in the light of later developments: He was right in his contention that simple repeal was not sufficient, and he was right in his desire to see the Volunteers kept under arms.

VI

Unlike Grattan, O'Connell and Sheil, who were brilliantly successful in the English commons, Henry Flood was unfortunate from the moment of his entrance. His first speech was a disappointment, due partly to his physical condition at the time, and to the weariness of travel, as he had reached London by "forced marches" to make it. Soon afterward he was

able to justify his Irish admirers by his masterful speeches in favor of his parliamentary reform bill, and on the commercial treaty with France. Very shortly after he had won the admiration of Fox by his argument on the French treaty he shocked the English party leaders by his expressed determination to hold aloof from all English parties and to play an independent rôle. With this announcement all parties lost interest, and in 1790 he lost his seat. Disappointed, embittered, and sadly broken in health, he retired to Farmley where his last year was spent in morose seclusion. As he felt death approaching he requested to be left alone, and thus, like the Spartan that he was, he passed from earth in solitude.

With all his faults, his virtues far outweighed them. His private life appears to have been such as to make the notation of the drunken Blanquiere in the alphabetical list utterly without justification. In social life he was easy, polished, graceful, with a mildness of manner that was all the more striking because of the ferocity of his onslaught in the commons. He moved in the salon with the courtliness of a courtier. He loved his books and was never happier than when he could find time for the seclusion of his library. His temper was customarily even and unruffled and he possessed the Spartan's power of suffering in silence. His love for Ireland was disclosed in the bequest of a professorship at Trinity for the teaching of the Gaelic language, and the fact that the will was broken is to the discredit of others. There is something remarkable in the fact that Flood stood more than a century ago for the Volunteer movement now so popular, for the study of Gaelic now in vogue, for absolute inde-

pendence of English parties, as did Parnell in later years. He loved Ireland.

VII

In forming an estimate of his oratory we are sadly handicapped by the meager material by which to judge. The greater portion of his speeches was but indifferently reported, seldom prepared, and never adequately collected. His great speech on the English Reform bill, for example, which won the admiration of Edmund Burke has come down to us in tantalizing fragments. His manner was, at times, highly theatrical and may have been patterned somewhat after that of Lord Chatham, upon whom he looked with an admiration akin to idolatry. He spoke with great deliberation, and his enunciation was perhaps a trifle too precise. Two instances may be cited as illustrative of his histrionic talent. One evening while he was speaking in the house, members of a convivial club, gaudily garbed in orange and blue, noisily entered. Instantly he exclaimed:

"Ha, what do I behold? I hail these glorious colors, auspicious of the constitution. These honorable men have no doubt spent the night in vigils for the glory and the fortune of the commonwealth."

Then, with a sarcastic smile, he extended his arms and continued: "Come—come to this heart with all your patriotism."

His acting on this occasion is said to have been consummate, and his sarcasm literally drove the revelers in confusion from the house.

On another occasion while he was speaking, his attention was directed to the activity of some of the whippers-in of the ministry going about among the benches, taking down the names of those who had promised to support the Castle, soliciting others, possibly bribing a few. Pausing a moment, and fixing his burning eyes upon them, he exclaimed:

"What is this that I see? Shall the temple of freedom be still haunted by the foul fiends of bribery and corruption? I see personified before me an incarnation of that evil principle which lives by the destruction of public virtue. Avaunt, thou loathsome sprite; thou panderer to ministerial profligacy; and no longer pollute with thy presence this edifice, consecrated to the constitution."

The effect of this denunciation was magical, and the whippers-in slunk hurriedly into the shadows. Such incidents vividly suggest the art of Lord Chatham. This boldness, this Mirabeauian audacity and spirit, made him an object as much of fear as of admiration.

His speeches are not the masterpieces of rhetorical art that those of the succeeding Irish orators are, but it was Flood who first introduced rhetorical eloquence into the Irish parliament. He was a little too sententious and labored at times, and while his speeches were always thoughtful and well reasoned, he frequently became a little pedantic. It required a big subject to do him justice. His great rival, Grattan, once said: "Put a distaff in his hand, and, like Hercules, he made sad work of it; but give him a thunderbolt and he had the arm of Jove." As a parliamentarian reasoner he had no rival among his Irish contemporaries. Some

of his more ardent admirers like to compare him to Demosthenes whose oration on the Crown he had taken for a model. He did have a concentrated energy in argumentation, a nervous manner suggestive of the great Athenian. He did not waste words. He used them merely as implements of thought. He consequently lacks the adornment of rhetoric associated with the Irish school. There are few flights of fancy, few poetic touches in his speeches. Occasionally he flashed a picture, but he was not given to the working out of an elaborate bit of imagery. In one of his speeches, in referring to the charge that his holding of office detracted from his capacity to serve his country, he said that should the time come when his governmental position would conflict with his patriotic duty he would "remove the bracelet and throw it into the common cauldron." On another occasion in referring to attacks being made upon him he concluded haughtily: "I am the object of their puny efforts, but they harm me not; I shake them off as falls the dew-drops from the lion's mane."

The speeches of Flood do not sparkle and burn with the majestic rhythm with which the succeeding Irish orators delighted the senses while appealing to the minds of their hearers, and few of his passages are such that they have been repeated. But he whose eloquence first made the ministers tremble, and whose genius commanded the adoration of his country and the admiration of Burke, Fox, Pitt and Wilberforce must always have a high place among the foremost of the Irish orators.

II

HENRY GRATTAN

The Fight Against the Embargo on Irish Exports; for the Independence of the Irish Parliament; Against the Commercial Propositions of Pitt; and Against the Policy of the Castle of Ruling by Corruption

TO one Irishman only was it given to associate his name with the most inspiring and the most depressing incidents of Erin's story. To have sounded the pæan of the triumph that gave his people an independent parliament, and to have been the most dramatic spectator of its fall was given only to him who "stood by its cradle and followed its hearse." This association alone would suffice to set him upon the pedestal as a man apart. But when to this is added his transcendent genius, his marvelous eloquence, his unfaltering fidelity to the cause of freedom, his impeccable integrity, and his almost primitive espousal of the cause of Catholic emancipation, he looms as one of the truly colossal figures of all history. Before him there were statesmen in Ireland who had their dreams of nationality, but he was the first whose conception of the nation embraced the Catholics. The nation of Flood's dream was a nation dominated by a small faction—a nation of bigotry. It was his successor who extended the boundaries to embrace all the people.

Aside from the things he did and the things he stood

for, the character of the man has given him preeminence in the estimation of posterity. He is the one paternal figure in Irish history—the one leader whose gentleness, goodness, graciousness are suggestive of Washington.

I

The theory of heredity and environment is given a blow in the case of Henry Grattan, whose father was a slave of the Castle and an enemy of the Catholics. The pet aversion of his father was Doctor Lucas, the eccentric patriot, from whom the son received the ideas that were to dominate his life. This divergence in the views of father and son was of early development and it tended to sadden the youth of the future leader.

It was not until he entered Dublin University in his seventeenth year, in 1763, that he began to disclose the exceptional ability that was to take him so far. An interesting feature of his college career is the fact that his one and only rival for scholastic honors was the same infamous Lord Clare who divided with him the choice prizes of the university. Our most satisfactory view of this period of Grattan's life is to be had in the voluminous correspondence with a classmate in which he is exhibited as a melancholy and poetic youth dreaming of a retirement to some quiet country lodging where he might "enjoy poverty and independency." We are led to believe by his biographers that this tendency to melancholy was born of the attitude of the father toward the liberal leanings of the son. If such were the true explanation it might account for

the apparent lack of political ambition which may have been suppressed out of deference to his sire. Certain it is that his studies at this time do not convince the reader of the sincerity of his wish for the obscurity of solitude. We find him fairly living with Lord Bolingbroke by whose "superiority as a reasoner and orator" he was greatly impressed—reading, analyzing, memorizing the choice specimens of his eloquence. Among the classic poets his favorite was Virgil, and strangely enough his favorite modern English poet was Pope, whom he thought possessed of a "correctness and elegance superior to any author" with some passages "where he is no less sublime."

When in his twenty-first year he passed over to London to study law at the Temple we find him still whimsically writing of the charms of country solitudes and devoting himself with significant assiduity to the study of politics and eloquence from the galleries of the lords. It was in looking down upon the performances of the majestic Chatham that the Irish student found a fit rival for his beloved Bolingbroke, and there can be no doubt but that the passionate oratorical outbursts of the great commoner and his theatrical delivery made a profound and permanent impression upon the youth in the gallery. The legal studies were almost wholly neglected and he became obsessed with politics, absorbed in his studies of parliamentary procedure, and parliamentary eloquence. The story is told that his landlady beseeched his friends to take him away because he was out of his mind—this idea being based on the fact that he sometimes walked up and down in her garden half the night speaking passionately to himself, and addressing some phantom

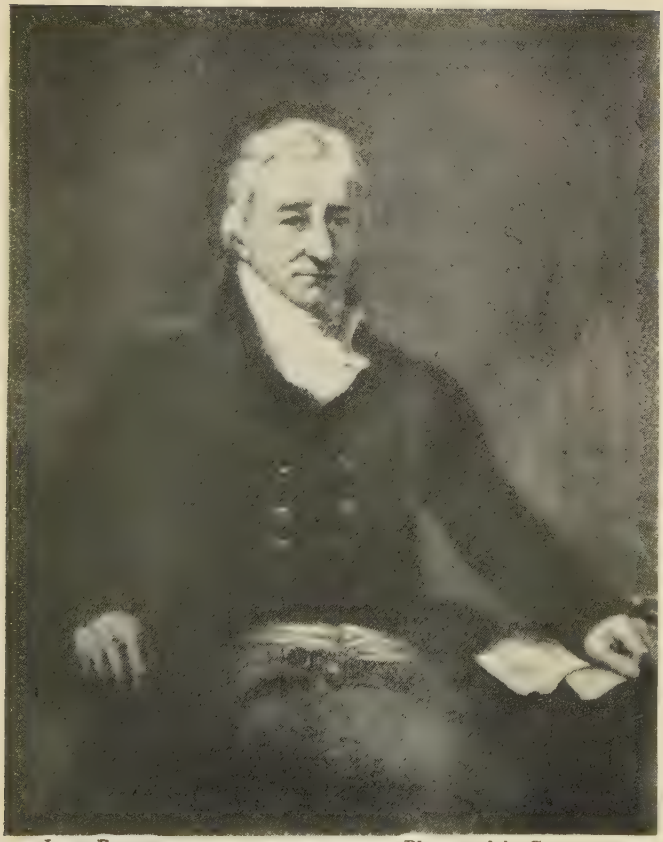
of the fancy as "Mr. Speaker." During his residence in England he shared chambers at the Temple with a friend with whom he took a house in Windsor Forest where he could dip into that poetic rusticity of which he was ever very fond. He loved the beautiful landscape, the romantic scenery that surrounded his abode, and not infrequently he would spend the whole of a moonlight night meandering through the country, oratorically improvising to the stars. On one of his rambles he suddenly found himself confronting a gibbet, and pausing, he began fervently to apostrophize the chains, when he felt a hand upon his shoulder and turned to face a stranger whose astonishing interrogation—"How in the devil did you get down," appealed immensely to his Irish sense of humor.

On his return to Ireland he found the fashionable portion of the country turning with avidity to private theatricals for diversion, and it was in connection with this pastime that he was to become intimately associated with another public character who was destined to feel the sting of his lash. The country life of the Irish aristocracy of that period was brilliant and elegant, and for a time we find Grattan, a handsome youth, with his share of romantic notions, passing from country house to country house, participating in the presentation of light comedies with an occasional tragedy to give dignity to the vogue. As we have seen in the sketch of Flood he did not shrink from undertaking a Shakesperian rôle. Thus dashing off clever verses to the ladies, and spouting dramatic lines from the stage, he seemed for a season to have abandoned all high ambition, but who shall say that this experience did not contribute materially to his preparation

for that more exalted theater in which he was to move. Even in his meanderings among the country houses, however, he found time for serious occupation and we find him engaged with Flood in the study of eloquence, and gathering inspiration from the older man for the political career toward which he may have been unconsciously tending.

In his twenty-fifth year he suddenly left Ireland and went to Paris, but he soon deserted the gaieties of the capital for the rural scenery of France, and we find him taking a leisurely sentimental journey to Vernon, and along the banks of the Loire.

Returning to Dublin in 1772 he was called to the Irish bar. In view of his own confession it may be said that he knew very little of the law, and it is certain that he was temperamentally unfitted for its practise. He appears to have decided to buckle down to his profession—but his decision, like a New Year's resolution, was broken lightly, and his name never figured in the proceedings of Four Courts. Fortunately, however, his distant association with the profession threw him into a circle of remarkable men, all of whom were to play brilliant and conspicuous parts in the political drama of the country. His group of friends embraced some of the choicest spirits of the time. These men formed a club, known as "The Society of Granby Row" and met frequently at one another's houses to discuss the politics of the day. It was here that Grattan took the postgraduate course that prepared him for public life. The presiding genius of the company was Charlemont. What a remarkable patriot! Unmindful of personal ambition he was ever ambitious for Ireland, and it was he who gave to public life Ed-



James Ramsay Photograph by Geoghegan

Henry Grattan

From a copy made for Lady Laura Grattan by Sir Thomas A. Jones, P.R.H.A.
for the purpose of presentation to the National Gallery of Ireland,
of the portrait in the possession of the Grattan family

mund Burke, Henry Flood, Henry Grattan, Lord Plunkett and many others. We have from the pen of Grattan one picture of an Attic evening at the home of Dennis Daly, a hurricane of debate, where they sat at table—for they were convivial souls—with books scattered all about them, at their elbows, at their feet, conversing about the wrongs of Ireland and the most effective method for the righting of them. Little wonder that such associations should have given the proper bent to Grattan's career! The sentimental dreams of rustic retirement vanished in the white light of this virile company, and, under the inspiration of their encouragement, Henry Grattan determined to dedicate his genius to the land of his love. Lord Charlemont eagerly paved the way to parliament, and thus, just at the time when the leadership of Flood was compromised by the enervating and corrupting influence of the Castle, and the patriot party was without a leader of genius sufficiently commanding, Henry Grattan took the oath as a member of the Irish house of commons and entered upon his political career.

II

The period at which Grattan entered the Irish parliament was critical, owing partly to the economic conditions growing out of the American revolution. By proclamation of the government an embargo had been laid upon the export of provisions from Irish ports, resulting in the utmost distress among the people. The linen trade declined and thousands of artisans were thrown out into the street without means of support. The industrial life but reflected the dire condi-

tions of the mart, and in every sphere of life, and in every locality, the utmost indignation against the governmental action was openly expressed. Meanwhile the expenses of government had been growing apace and the notorious pension list had been extended out of all proportion with the common decencies of things. Amazing as it may seem to one unfamiliar with the attitude of arbitrary power toward public opinion, this, of all times, was selected for increasing official salaries.

Such being the situation, it is not surprising to see Grattan joining forces with the opposition, and within four days after taking the oath, we find him stoutly supporting a motion on the embargo to the effect "that the attempt to suspend law, under the color of the prerogative of the crown is illegal." His speech on this occasion, while inadequately reported, attracted wide attention, the Dublin press laying particular stress upon his "spontaneous flow of natural eloquence." Thus from his initial speech he ranked among the foremost of the orators. A little later he took it upon himself to move for retrenchment in expenses, and in his speech in support of his motion, he returned to the attack on the embargo and opened up vigorously upon the pension evil. The most interesting phase of this speech lies in the fact that Charles James Fox, who was then in Dublin, occupied a seat on the floor, and was greatly impressed by the eloquence of the young orator. He sought an opportunity to meet Grattan socially and from this meeting developed the close and ardent friendship destined to have its effect on the political history of the times. A little later we find Grattan renewing his attack upon the embargo,

the pension list, and the increased salaries in a motion for an address to the king, and all to no avail.

Meanwhile conditions were becoming desperate. The power in London was either ignorant of, or indifferent to, the fate of the green isle, and about this time Lord North, in merry mood, was declaring that "everything was a scene of festivity in Ireland." So far was this from the truth that even the government was reduced to the humiliating and disgraceful necessity of negotiating a loan from a private banking-house of Dublin to prevent the complete dissolution of the state. The banking house of LaTouche responded to the pitiful cry for succor with a loan of twenty thousand pounds, but this proved to be but a drop in the bucket of necessity. Another appeal was made to the private banking house, but the bankers declined to increase the government's indebtedness, and the state stood dissolved in fact, if not by open confession of authority. To add to the desperation of the situation an invasion from France was feared and the government admitted its inability to put into the field a military force of sufficient magnitude to protect the country from the foreign enemy. Then there sprang into existence that marvelous and immortal body of men known as the Volunteers.

This tragic situation was Ireland's opportunity. None were so blind they could not see the mockery of submitting to commercial restrictions ruinous to trade from a government so weak, and the demand rose from all classes and sections for free trade. The press teemed with articles voicing the popular desire. The Volunteers passed resolutions of similar import. The

proposal was made that the people should buy only articles of Irish manufacture and the response was spontaneous and enthusiastic. The hour of Ireland's redemption from commercial bondage had struck.

No one else saw this opportunity so quickly as Henry Grattan. He determined to seize it without delay. He laid aside, for a season, all other ideas of reform to concentrate his efforts in behalf of trade and manufactures. And so one day, in company with Daly and Burgh, he went down to the little town of Bray upon the coast to prepare the proper motion and perfect plans for the parliamentary struggle.

Meanwhile the government had been busily employed exerting every possible influence to prevent the intended motion from being made.

The debate following the presentation of the Grattan amendment was prolific of surprises. Hussey Burgh, a member of the government, declared that with some slight alteration in the commencement of the amendment he would heartily support it. This was quickly agreed to. Then Flood, not to be outdone by his rival, suggested the substitution of the plain words "free trade" in lieu of "free export and import," and Grattan hastened to accept the suggestion. The demoralization of the forces of the Castle made opposition impractical and the amendment to the address was passed without one dissenting vote. And this splendid triumph was won by Grattan against the advice of practically all his trusted friends! When the entire house marched through the streets, lined with the Volunteers, on its way to the Castle a new day dawned for Ireland. The giant had awakened from its slumbers. The novelty of the people's representa-

tives asserting the right to legislate for Ireland touched the imaginations of the masses who thronged the streets, cheering the members as they passed.

The king's reply was, as expected, an evasion, couched in the meaningless phraseology of hope. But the day of procrastination had passed. The Volunteers, under arms, were an ominous menace to the Castle, and one daring soul asserted on the floor of the house that the reform would be given by parliament or be taken by the Volunteers! The government quickly seized on this ultimatum in an attempt to cripple the patriots and divert the issue, only to be met by Grattan with a vigorous defense of the Volunteers and an assertion of their right, as citizens, to direct the course of their parliamentary representatives. These armed patriots likewise accepted the challenge, and at numerous meetings the representatives were instructed to vote supplies for no more than six months.

The people were now in ugly mood. The Volunteers paraded in the capital while the multitude cheered. The city was illuminated in celebration of the success of Grattan's motion. Members on their way to the house were stopped by citizens with pistols and swords and ordered to vote a Short Money bill. The carriage of the speaker was halted and he was forced to take an oath. The militia was called out—only to fall back before the jeers and laughter of the people.

The house met and Grattan rose and calmly offered a short resolution:

"Resolved that at this time it would be inexpedient to grant new taxes."

This resolution was passed unanimously.

The next day it was moved that the appropriated duties should be granted for six months only—and this carried by a large majority. It was in the discussion of this motion that Ireland found her Patrick Henry when Burgh exclaimed amid the greatest excitement:

"Talk not to me of peace; Ireland is not in a state of peace; it is smothered war. England has sown her laws like dragon's teeth, and they have sprung up in armed men."

This utterance lost Burgh his place in the government, but it won from Grattan a more precious gift in the form of the tribute that "the gates of promotion were shut as those of glory opened."

Rapidly the Irish movement was now progressing along the lines of the American revolution. In Burgh was found the Patrick Henry; in Alderman Horan, a Dublin merchant, was disclosed the Boston spirit. Audaciously taking the ground that the English parliament could not bind Ireland, he tendered his goods for export at the custom house. Thoroughly alarmed, the custom official notified the lord lieutenant, who, in turn, communicated with London. The situation was filled with dynamite. The least spark,—and it would have exploded in revolution. Fortunately, perhaps, Grattan and his followers managed to prevent a premature uprising of the people, until Lord North, realizing the fatuity of further resistance, yielded to the inevitable, and the free trade measures of 1779 were enacted into law. Grattan was at this time a young man of thirty-three years!

The free trade victory failed, however, to lull the people to sleep again. The concession had been all but forced at the point of the bayonet, and the nation realized the insecurity of its position. It knew that the same power that had granted the concession could withdraw it later on, and the Volunteers, with the hearty cooperation of Grattan, determined to press without delay for the modification of Poyning's law and the repeal of the sixth of George First, which declared the dependency of Ireland.

When Grattan served notice that he would ask for a declaration of Irish rights the Castle became thoroughly alive to the fact that a movement had been launched which aimed at nothing less than the independence of the Irish parliament, and all the creatures of government were set to work to canvass against the declaration and the repeal. The awakened people rallied enthusiastically around the young tribune, and petitions poured in from mass meetings of citizens and conventions of the Volunteers. To appreciate the true superiority of Grattan it is but necessary to know that even his most intimate friends and the most ardent patriots looked upon his new proposition with feelings of genuine alarm. He was censured by the Burgh who had supported the free trade movement, and by the Daly who had cooperated with him in that work. Lord Charlemont timidly held back, and from London came the frantic message of Edmund Burke, "Will no one speak to this mad man? will no one stop this mad man Grattan?"

In truth it was an enormous responsibility Grattan had taken upon himself—the salvation of his country, the righting of the multitudinous wrongs of years.

He was young, inexperienced in the intricacies of politics, without influential family connections, without a powerful personal following of any description, and so poor that, according to his own statement, he could scarcely boast of an income of five hundred pounds a year. Some of the truest patriots and ablest statesmen in Ireland urged him to desist lest the ire of the English, being aroused, would lead to the withdrawal of the few concessions granted, and the infliction of greater hardships upon the country. Beset by the importunities of his friends, Grattan left Dublin and sought the solitude of Celbridge Abbey and the advice of his uncle. There on the banks of the beautiful river "amid the groves and bowers of Swift and Vanessa" he confirmed his purpose.

When on April nineteenth, 1780, he rose in the awesome silence of the house to present the resolutions to the effect "That his most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords and commons of Ireland, are the only power competent to enact laws to bind Ireland," Ireland became a nation—for she had found a Voice. His speech on this occasion was the greatest of his career. He spoke with a great volume of tone and appeared to many who heard him as one inspired. With rapidity and fire, with a commanding and majestic eloquence that thrilled and captivated, he compelled the respect of his enemies and won the undying admiration of his people and of posterity.

With the boldness of defiance and the consciousness of power he spoke the frank language of a free man and in conclusion thrilled and startled the house and galleries with that almost inspired peroration which

has never been surpassed and seldom equaled by any orator in the world's history:

"Do not tolerate that power which blasted you for a century, which shattered your loom, banished your manufactures, dishonored your peerage, and stopped the growth of your people; do not, I say, be bribed by any export of woolen, or an import of sugar, and permit that power which has thus withered the land to remain in your country and have existence in your pusillanimity.

"Do not suffer the arrogance of England to imagine a surviving hope in the fears of Ireland; do not send the people to their own resolves for liberty, passing by the tribunals of justice and the high court of parliament; neither imagine that, by any formation of apology, you can palliate such a commission to your hearts, still less to your children, who will sting you with their curses in your grave for having interposed between them and their maker, robbing them of an immense occasion, and losing an opportunity which you did not create, and can never restore.

"Hereafter, when these things shall be history, your age of thraldom and poverty, your sudden resurrection, commercial redress, and miraculous armament, shall the historian stop at liberty, and observe—that here the principal men among us fell into mimic trances of gratitude—they were awed by a weak ministry, and bribed by an empty treasury—and when liberty was within their grasp, and the temple opened her folding doors, and the arms of the people clanged, and the zeal of the nation encouraged and urged them on, that they fell down, and were prostituted at the threshold.

"I might, as a constituent, come to your bar, and demand my liberty. I do call upon you, by the laws of the land and their violation, by the instruction of eighteen counties, by the arms, inspiration and providence of the present moment, tell us the rule by which we shall go—assert the laws of Ireland—declare the liberty of the land.

"I will not be answered by a public lie, in the way of an amendment; neither, speaking for the subject's freedom, am I to hear of faction. I wish for nothing but to breathe, in this our island, in common with my fellow subjects, the air of liberty. I have no ambition, unless it be the ambition to break your chains, and contemplate your glory. I never will be satisfied so long as the meanest cottager in Ireland has a link of the British chain clanking to his rags; he may be naked, he shall not be in irons; and I do see the time is at hand, the spirit is gone forth, the declaration is planted; and though great men should apostatize, yet the cause will live; and though the public speaker should die, yet the immortal fire shall outlive the humble organ which conveyed it, and the breath of liberty, like the word of the holy man, will not die with the prophet, but survive him."

When Grattan sat down after his masterful effort of two hours' duration and his resolution was seconded by the father of Lord Castlereagh—a bit of the irony of fate—the lines were distinctly drawn in the battle for the legislative independence of Ireland. The effect of the speech, magical though it was in the house, was destined to exercise a far more remarkable influence upon the awakened country. It was like a fire bell clanging in the night—the tocsin, calling the people to arms. Its immediate results were unsatisfactory. Lord Clare followed with an abusive speech leveled at the Volunteers, and Henry Flood urged a postponement of the issue on the rather ridiculous ground that all might be won by gratitude. Happily, through a clever parliamentary device of Burgh, there was no adverse parliamentary record of the resolutions. The day following, the lord lieutenant wrote to England

to the effect that Grattan had spoken "with great ability, and with a great warmth and enthusiasm."

Henceforth Grattan concentrated his energies to bring about the early consummation of his plans for Ireland, and strangely enough the government, through a seemingly blind stupidity, played into his hands in practically every move it made. The people were predisposed toward the plan in the beginning, but the series of unpopular measures thrust upon the country immediately after Grattan had offered his resolutions served to intensify the determination of the nation to achieve its independence. Hardly had Ireland won her commercial rights when England sought to impose a duty on raw sugar, thereby dealing a serious blow to the sugar refineries of the country, and forcing upon the popular mind the insecurity of the concessions granted. This stupid move inflamed the people. They met in mass meetings all over the island to voice their protest and pledge themselves to consume or import none of that species of sugar.

The seed Grattan had sown now fell on fertile soil. Following close upon this unfortunate incident came the controversy over the Mutiny bill, an obnoxious law which the ministers proposed to impose upon the Irish. This indicated a disposition on the part of the government to tyrannize over Ireland, alarmed even the most conservative, and aroused the intense indignation of the masses.

Owing to the fact that the parliament was yet more subservient than the people the perpetual Mutiny bill was enacted, and Grattan, determined to use the unpopular measure to fan into a conflagration the indignation of the people, served notice that at the begin-

ning of the next session he would move the repeal of the law. True to his word he brought the Mutiny bill before the house at the earliest opportunity in a speech which rang with a militancy that thrilled the country.

"However astonishing it may appear," he began impressively, "I rise in the 18th century to vindicate Magna Charta, sanctified as it is by the authority of six hundred years. I call upon gentlemen to teach British privileges to an Irish senate. I quote the laws of England, first, because they are laws; secondly, because they are franchises of Irishmen as well as of Englishmen. I am not come to say what is expedient; I come to demand a right, and I hope that I am speaking to men who know and feel their rights, and not to corrupt consciences and inferior capacities. I beg gentlemen to tell me why, and for what reason, the Irish nation was deprived of the British constitution; the limitation of the Mutiny bill was one of the great hinges of the constitution, and ought it then to be perpetual in Ireland. . . . We want not an army as Great Britain does; for an army is not our protection: we keep up an army only to strengthen the arm of prerogative; and in the hour of danger, this boasted army is not found at home to support you. Was your army your protection when Sir Richard Heron told you you must trust to God and your country? You want it not for defense, you want it not for ambition; you have no foreign dominions to preserve, and your people are amenable to law. Our duties are of a different nature—to watch with incessant vigils the cradle of the constitution; to rear an infant state, to protect a rising trade, to foster a growing people: among all the varieties of secretaries and of religions, everything here is unanimity; the new world has overturned the prejudices of the old; it has let in a light upon mankind, and the modern philosophy has taught men to look upon each other as brethren, not as enemies. We are free, we are united—persecution is

dead; the Protestant religion is the child of the constitution, the Presbyterian is the father, the Roman Catholic is not an enemy to it: we are united in one great national community. What was our situation formerly? We were a gentry without pride, and a people without privilege; every man was convinced of his rights, but until lately every man had neglected them. The British constitution lay upon the ground like a giant's armor in a dwarf's custody: at length the nation asserted itself, and though the declaration of rights was not carried, which I proposed as a measure safe and unobnoxious, yet our spirit made us a nation. British supremacy fell upon the earth like a spent thunderbolt: the minister feared to look at it; the people were fain to touch it."

Thus did he make the unpopularity of the Perpetual Mutiny bill do battle for the Declaration of Rights; thus did he feed the growing sense of nationality; thus did he associate in the popular mind the liberty of the people with their unanimity and religious toleration. The motion was defeated in the house, but Grattan had given more ammunition to the people.

And the people were awake as never before. Especially was this true of the Volunteers, who had now come to be associated even in the minds of the most conservative with the liberty of the subject. Attacked by the brutality of Lord Clare, their motives impugned, their characters assailed, they now became the militant nucleus of the movement toward national independence. In their beginning representing the masses, they now became truly representative of every Irish element. The aristocracy joined their ranks. The worth, the wealth, the genius of the land marched with the Volunteers. And at their head was that Washington of Erin—the accomplished Charlemont. All over the

island these men were on the march. The forty thousand had become one hundred thousand. The reviews of the corps by the old aristocracy of the country served notice now that they had become synonymous with Ireland. Military associations sprang up as if by magic in every nook and corner of the country, and the men, clothed with Irish manufacture, soon took on the appearance of seasoned soldiers ready to do battle upon the field. The women wove the colors that they carried. The churches bestowed their benediction in their contributions. The press applauded their spirit and urged them to stand firm. The government, amazed and alarmed, contemplated prosecutions but quickly abandoned the idea in the realization that it would precipitate a revolution. When Lord Charlemont went to the North to review the various corps of that section he was accompanied by Henry Grattan, who stood by his side and saluted the men upon whom now rested the salvation of the state.

Meanwhile the people became cognizant of their parliament. They had become educated to believe that the members of the house were their members, by all the rules of political ethics, responsible to their will. They began to flock to the gallery of the house, and day after day the seven hundred seats were filled with eager patriots looking down grimly upon the parliamentary battle-field. The sugar tax had made converts for the Declaration of Rights; the Mutiny bill had played into the hands of Grattan; the refusal to restore the rights of the Catholics was the last straw. And then came the great historic convention of the Volunteers at Dungannon and the resolution to the effect that "the claim of any body of men, other than the

king, lords and commons of Ireland, to make laws to bind this kingdom is unconstitutional, illegal, and a grievance."

The country was now aflame. The resolution of independence was echoed defiantly by every Volunteer corps and military association. The spirit of revolution was in the air—and at the head of the revolutionists stood Grattan. Just at this juncture, with Ireland in arms, and England at the mercy of the Volunteers, he again moved an address to the king on the Declaration of Rights. After having examined from every angle the claims of England to legislate for Ireland and exposed the flimsy foundation on which they rested, he proceeded in language that must have suggested to the minister the rattle of musketry:

"This brings the claim of England to the mere question of force: it is a right which Swift, I think, has explained—the right of the grenadier to take the property of the naked man. I add, this man has now gotten back arms, and begs to get back his property. Thus the question remaining is the question of ability; and in considering this, you are not to contemplate alone the difficulties in your front; you are to look back, too, upon the strength of your rear. The claim by conquest naturally leads to the subject of the Volunteers. You have an immense force, the shape of a much greater of different religions, but of one political faith, kept up for three years defending the country; for the government took away her troops and consigned her defense to the people—defending the government, I say, aiding the civil power, and pledged to maintain the liberty of Ireland to the last drop of their blood. Who is this body? The commons of Ireland—and you at the head of them: it is more—it is society in its greatest possible description; it is the property—it is the soul

of the country armed: they, for this body, have yet no adequate name. In the summer of 1780 they agree to a declaration of right; in the summer of 1781 they hear that the French are at sea; in the heat and hurricane of their zeal for liberty, they stop; without delay, they offer to march; their march waits only for the commands of the Castle: the Castle where the sagacious courtier had abandoned his uniform, finds it prudent to receive a self-armed association: that self-armed association, this age has beheld; posterity will admire—will wonder. The delegates of that self-armed association enter the mansion of the government, ascend the steps, advance to the presence of the lord lieutenant, and make a tender of their lives and fortunes, with the form and reception of an authenticated establishment. A painter might here display and contrast the loyalty of a courtier with that of a Volunteer; he would paint the courtier hurrying off his uniform, casting away his arms, filling his pocket with the public money, and then presenting to his sovereign naked servitude; he would paint the Volunteer seizing his charters, handling his arms, forming his columns, improving his discipline, demanding his rights, and then, at the foot of the throne, making a tender of armed allegiance. He had no objection to die by the side of England; but he must be found dead with her charter in his hand."

Such language as this, voicing the unanimous sentiment of the people, backed by one hundred thousand determined men in arms, had its effect upon the statesmen in London. Dublin Castle found itself confronting concession or revolution. The English element began to weaken. And as it began to weaken, Grattan pushed forward with an announcement that he would again bring forward the Declaration of Rights, and moved that the speaker write circular letters to all members ordering them to be in their seats on April

sixteenth, 1782. The motion was carried and now for the first time the statesmen in England really understood the import of the proceedings in Ireland during the two preceding years. Meanwhile the Whigs had come into power, and Fox and Rockingham had not only pretended a partiality for Grattan, but had always asserted their devotion to the Irish cause. Suddenly, unexpectedly, they found themselves facing the early necessity of making their pretensions good. They now began to play for time, to negotiate a postponement of the question. They finally enlisted Charlemont in the cause of postponement and he was sent to persuade Grattan's agreement. He found the orator on a sick bed. "No time, no time," he exclaimed impatiently; and then he dictated a letter to Rockingham to the effect that they could not delay, that they were pledged to the people, that they could not postpone the question because the measures were public property. Defeated in this, Fox and Rockingham now begged both Grattan and Charlemont to accept office in the hope of thereby securing time, but their importunities were politely declined. This meant the Declaration of Rights or war. The government had but five thousand troops in Ireland and there were one hundred thousand Volunteers.

Meanwhile the Duke of Portland was sent over as lord lieutenant, and the resolutions to be proposed were submitted to him. He read them carefully and suggested some modifications tending to soften the blow to England only to have them politely rejected. Right on the heels of this rejection Grattan sent over to the ministers in London an enumeration of his demands: the relinquishment of the legislative and appel-

lant judicature by the British parliament, or the repeal of the sixth of George First; the discontinuance of the practise of altering or suppressing bills; the repeal of the Perpetual Mutiny bill, with a new bill limited to two years; the limitation and regulation of his majesty's forces; the radical modification of Poyning's law. This was an ultimatum—and it meant concession or war!

The tables were now verily turned. England was at the mercy of the sister island. She could not postpone. She could not bribe. She could not frighten. She could not fight. And thus it was she surrendered to the inevitable and drifted.

In those days the home of Grattan, in Dublin, was directly across from the Castle and for several days preceding the date set for the Declaration, the house swarmed with anxious visitors. The avenues were blocked with carriages of celebrities who were attending, not a reception at the Castle, but a patriotic levee at Grattan's. The orator was in ill health, but the enthusiasm of the moment sustained him, and when the day dawned it found him thoroughly prepared. The capital swarmed with the Volunteers—cavalry, infantry, artillery, on the quays, the bridges, the approaches to the two houses of parliament. At an early hour the galleries of the house were packed with men and women whose faces glowed with the inspiration of the occasion. The regular troops made a pathetic showing as they formed a passage for the lord lieutenant on his way to deliver the king's message. Accompanied by Daly, Burgh, Yelverton and the father of Lord Castlereagh, Grattan left his home and went to the house.

The message from his majesty was read. The motion of thanks was offered. Then Grattan rose, pale, worn, bearing evidence of his illness and showing traces of intense anxiety. The silence of a sepulcher was on the house. The crowded galleries leaned forward. Then, after looking proudly upon the scene, the orator began in a clear exultant tone:

"I am now to address a free people; ages have passed away, and this is the first moment in which you could be distinguished by that appellation.

"I have spoken on the subject of your liberty so often, that I have nothing to add, and have only to admire by what heaven-directed steps you have proceeded until the whole faculty of the nation is braced up to the act of her own deliverance.

"I found Ireland on her knees, I watched over her with eternal solicitude; I have traced her progress from injury to arms, from arms to liberty. Spirit of Swift, spirit of Molyneux, your genius has prevailed. Ireland is now a nation. In that new character I hail her, and bowing to her august presence, I say, *esto perpetua.*

"She is no longer a wretched colony, returning thanks to her governor for his rapine, and to her king for his oppression; nor is she now a squabbling, fretful sectary, perplexing her little wits, and firing her furious statutes with bigotry, sophistries, disabilities and death, to transmit to posterity insignificance and war."

With a glowing enthusiasm he compared the state of Ireland with that of less fortunate nations, glorified in the fact that she had won her liberty rather than coaxed it from concessions that might be withdrawn, declared that the repeal of the English claim under the operation of a treaty would be irrevocable, and expressed his satisfaction that the people of all religions

were a party to the treaty and were bound to preserve it. He then passed on to the grievances that had wrought the revolution.

"Let other nations," he said, "be deceived by the sophistry of courts. Ireland has studied politics in the lair of oppression, and, taught by suffering, comprehends the rights of subjects and the duty of kings. Let other nations imagine that subjects are made for the monarch, but we conceive that kings and parliaments, like kings, are made for the subjects. The house of commons, honorable and right honorable as it may be; the lords, noble and illustrious as we pronounce them, are not original, but derivative. Session after session they move their periodical orbit about the source of their being, the nation; even the king's majesty must fulfil his due and tributary course round that great luminary; and created by its beam, and upheld by its attraction, must incline to that light, or go out of the system."

Enumerating the wrongs perpetrated upon Ireland and denying the authority upon which they were wrought he proceeded:

"The government has contended for the usurpation and the people for the laws. His majesty's late ministers imagined that they had quelled the country when they had bought the newspapers; and they represented us as wild men, and our cause as visionary; and they pensioned a set of wretches to abuse both: but we took little account of them or their proceedings, and we waited and we watched, and we moved, as it were, on our native hills, with the minor remains of our parliamentary army, until the minority became Ireland."

With a few explanatory words he concluded by moving the Declaration of Rights. The government,

helpless and without a policy, offered no resistance, and the motion carried without a division. The news spread like lightning. The Volunteers sustained their reputation by the dignity of their decorum, but the people of Dublin gave way to transports of enthusiasm, and at night the city was illuminated. The next day the Volunteers of Leicester, with Henry Flood in the chair, passed resolutions supporting Grattan and the Declaration and pledging their lives and fortunes.

During the necessary delay on the part of England to accede the demands, Grattan remained quietly in his home, watching the proceedings across the channel with the keenest anxiety, for he had reached the firm determination that in the event of refusal he would make his appeal to the God of battles. He gave out that he had gone to the country and held no intercourse with the Castle. In due time, Charles James Fox, acting in good faith, took the necessary steps on the part of England—and Ireland achieved her legislative independence!

This concludes the most glorious and the happiest period of Grattan's career. He was to serve his country with wonderful brilliancy and power for many years to come, but never again was he to attain such heights of achievement for his people. He had traced the progress of Ireland "from injury to arms, from arms to liberty"—and that was to constitute his claims on immortality.

III

Extreme popularity in the case of public men is almost invariably followed with reaction, and it was not

long until the popular idol to whom the grateful nation had voted a home after the passage of the Bill of Rights was made to feel the sharp tooth of ingratitude. The causes of this reaction in the case of Grattan have been set forth in the sketch of Flood who contributed, not a little, to the poisoning of the public mind in regard to his great rival. The controversy over simple repeal and the action of the Volunteers, so embittered a large portion of his former followers that a conspiracy was actually formed to assault him one night on his way home from a dinner of the officers of the military organizations. Confident of the rectitude of his intentions, and convinced of the wisdom of his course Grattan maintained a dignified attitude throughout, and even after the famous exchange of philippics with Flood, the younger man supported the older in his fight for the parliamentary reform proposed by the Volunteers' convention. We learn in the correspondence between the minister and the lord lieutenant that the government had counted upon the opposition of Grattan to the proposed reform because of the relations of the two men, but it had failed to take into consideration the truly noble nature of the great orator who had given Ireland her independence.

The first convincing evidence of the unfriendly attitude of the English ministry, and of the disposition to resort to trickery in their dealings with Ireland came with the double dealing incident to the commercial propositions. The prosperity of Ireland was affected in 1783 by the distress of the agricultural classes which reached every element in the country and led to the clamor for protecting duties for the manufacturers. Grattan gave a reluctant consent to the propo-

sitions which were to be incorporated in a treaty between the two islands whereby Ireland was to obtain the right to export into England through Ireland, in return for the concession by Ireland of the surplus of the hereditary revenue. The propositions while seemingly good from the commercial point of view, were not considered wise by Grattan as a political measure, but he yielded to the popular demand and gave them his support. Acting upon the supposition that everything had been agreed to, the Irish parliament voted the payment of one hundred and forty thousand pounds as her part of the bargain, but she had hardly given this evidence of her good faith when Pitt brought into the English parliament eighteen entirely new propositions that were utterly impossible from the Irish point of view. One of these propositions would have bound Ireland to adopt such laws as England might pass relating to her commercial concerns. When these propositions, conceived in bad faith and in a spirit of trickery, were submitted to the Irish parliament Grattan bitterly assailed them as being at war with the principles of the Irish revolution.

"It is a market for a constitution," he said, "and a logic applicable to barter only, is applied to freedom. To qualify this dereliction of every principle and power, the surrender is made constitutional, that is, the British market for the Irish constitution; the shadow of a market for the substance of a constitution. You are to reserve an option, trade or liberty; if you mean to come to the British market, you must pass under the British yoke. I object to this principle in every shape, whether you are, as the resolution was first worded, directly to transfer legislative power to the British parliament; whether, as it was afterward altered, you are

to covenant to subscribe her acts; or whether, as it is now softened, you are to take the chance of the British market, so long as you waive the blessings of the British constitution—terms dishonorable, derogatory, incapable of forming the foundation of any fair and friendly settlement, injurious to the political morality of the nation. I would not harbor a slavish principle, nor give it the hospitality of a night's lodging in a land of liberty. Slavery is like any other vice, tolerate, and you embrace. You should guard your constitution by settled maxims of honor, as well as wholesome rules of law; and one maxim should be never to tolerate a condition which trenches on the privilege of parliament, or derogates from the pride of the island. Liberal in matters of revenue, practical in matters of commerce; on these subjects I would be inexorable; if the genius of old England came to that bar, with the British constitution in one hand, and in the other an offer of all that England retains, or all that she has lost of commerce, I should turn my back on the latter, and pay my obeisance to the blessings of her constitution; for that constitution will give you commerce, and it was the loss of that constitution which deprived you of commerce. Why are you not now a woolen country? Because another country regulated your trade. Why are you not now a country of re-export? Because another country regulated your navigation. I oppose the original terms as slavish, and I oppose the conditional clause as an artful way of introducing slavery, of soothing a high-spirited nation into submission by the ignominious delusion that she may shake off the yoke when she pleases, and once more become a free people. The direct unconstitutional proposition could not have been listened to, and therefore resort is had to the only possible chance of destroying the liberty of the people, by holding up the bright reversion of the British constitution, as the speculation of future liberty, as a consolation for present submission."

The defeat of these propositions had two important

effects: it restored the popularity of Grattan, and incurred for Ireland that bitter enmity in Pitt which was to persist with a devilish tenacity until the fateful purchase of the liberties of the Irish people. The spirited opposition of Grattan to the Pitt program revived the enthusiasm and confidence of the nation, and when, in speaking upon the address to the lord lieutenant a little later, the popular tribune, in reiterating his warning against the propositions, concluded with the promise to persist in his opposition:

"Having expressed my fears lest this bill should be revived, I do declare that if such a measure, or anything like it, should hereafter be produced I shall be in my place to oppose the yoke, to oppose the system founded upon principles of empire, not commerce, recommended by the language of insult, justified by deprecating the real value and importance of Ireland, and accompanied with the surrender of the constitution and commerce, and of everything that is dear to this country."

It was such a spirit as that indicated in Grattan's speeches against the Pitt propositions that convinced the English ministers that Ireland proposed to take her legislative independence seriously, and it was probably at this time that the systematic corruption of the Irish parliament was begun through the bribery of pensions. On this evil Grattan had pronounced views. It was a realization of this danger which had impelled him to support Flood's reform bill. It now led him to support the movement to correct the pension evil. When in the session of 1785 the subject was called to the attention of the house, Grattan startled the runners of the Castle by having the entire pension list read and

made public. By thus turning on the light of publicity he hoped to deter those members who might be contemplating the sale of their influence. Nor did he stop with that alone. He followed it up with a speech of tremendous force, in which he called attention to the enormous increase in the pension list, and laid stress upon the fact that it had attained proportions equal to that of Great Britain.

"Another argument," he said, "advanced in its defense, tells you that the new pension list, or the last catalogue, is small; Sir, it is greater than the produce of your new tax on hawkers and pedlers. Why continue that tax? When I see the state repose itself on beggars, I pity and submit. But when I see the state give away its taxes thus eviscerated from the poor; when I see government come to the poor man's hovel for a part of his loaf, to scatter it; when I see government tax the pedler to pamper the pensioner, I blush for the extortion of the state, and reprobate an offense, that may be well called prodigality of rapine.

"Sir, when gentlemen say that the new charge for pensions is small, let me assure them they need not be alarmed; the charge will be much greater; for, unless your interposition should deter, what else is there to check it? Will public poverty? No. New taxes? No. Gratitude for those taxes? No. Principle? No. Profession? No. The love of fame or sense of infamy? No. Confined to no one description of merit, or want of character, under the authority of that list, every man, woman and child in Ireland have pretensions to become a public encumbrance; so that, since government went so far, I marvel that they have stopped, unless the pen fell out of their hand from fatigue, for it could not be from principle.

"No, Sir, this list will go on; it will go on till the merchant shall feel it; until the manufacturer shall feel it; until the pension list shall take in its own hands the

key of taxation; and instead of taxing license to sell, shall tax the article and the manufacturer itself; until we shall lose our great commercial resource, a comparative exemption from taxes, the gift of our poverty, and get an accumulation of taxes to be the companion of our poverty; until public indignation shall cry shame upon us, and the morality of a serious and offended community shall call out for the interposition of the law."

In the light of what the world now knows of the methods resorted to by Pitt and his Castle agents to influence the legislation of Ireland and ultimately to purchase the liberty of the people, it is not surprising that the speeches of Grattan, exposing the enormity of the pension evil, should have given great umbrage to the government. A little later, in the discussion of the Navigation Act, he increased his unpopularity in ministerial circles by insisting and proving that the act was intended to apply to Ireland as well as England. It was becoming increasingly impossible for a man to be a patriot in parliament without antagonizing the government in all its policies. It was becoming almost impossible successfully to oppose the government because of the systematic corruption of members to which it was now resorting.

IV

It was in 1786 that Grattan began his fight for the righting of the wrongs due to tithes. The evils growing out of tithes had now become a serious menace to the tranquillity of the country. It was the period of the Whiteboy disturbances. Instead of going into

the cause of this extensive uprising with the view to the tranquilizing of the people through a policy of reformation, Lord Clare brought in and pushed to passage a semi-barbarous bill to prevent tumultuous uprisings, a bill so brutal that Grattan aptly compared it to the laws of Draco. Although unable to prevent its passage Grattan did succeed in eliminating the worst feature, which authorized the destruction of a Catholic church in the event an unlawful oath should be administered, not in it, but adjoining it! The savagery of the government in dealing with the disturbances, directed Grattan's attention to the evil of tithes, an evil which reduced the peasantry to a condition as helpless and hopeless as that of the peasantry of France before the revolution. Laws were enacted, not for the protection of the poor against the extortion of the clergy and their cruel collectors, but for the purpose of facilitating the shameful robbery. The peasants were being reduced to a pitiful state of poverty, yet when attention was directed to their condition by Grattan, it was insolently asserted by Lord Clare that the blame was due entirely to the indolence of the people. After a few preliminary battles, Grattan offered a resolution providing for the appointment of a committee to ascertain if the discontent in the southern part of Ireland was due to tithes, and, if so, to recommend some plan of amelioration. His speech on this occasion, delivered February fourteenth, 1788, was one of the most eloquent and effective of his life. His heart had been deeply touched by the suffering of the people, his indignation aroused by the brutality of the authorities, his contempt inflamed by the rank hypocrisy of a large portion of the clergy who proposed,

while preaching the Gospel of the Nazarene, to extort from the poor that they might live in luxury and ease. In a three hours' speech, which was statesmanlike, philosophic and philanthropic, he commanded the admiring attention of the house and even elicited from Lord Clare the compliment that it was one of the most marvelous displays of eloquence ever heard in the house of commons. After having set forth the reasons demanding an inquiry he proceeded:

"Here let me return to and repeat the allegations, and call upon you once more to make the inquiry. It is alleged that in certain parishes of the south tithe has been demanded and paid for what, by law, was not liable to tithe; and that the ecclesiastical courts have countenanced the illegal exaction; and evidence is offered at your bar to prove the charges on oath.

"Will you deny the fact? Will you justify the fact? Will you inquire into it?

"It is alleged that tithe proctors, in certain parishes of the south, do exact fees for agency, oppressive and illegal; and evidence to prove the charge is offered on oath. Will you deny the fact? Will you justify the fact? Will you inquire into it?

"It is alleged that in certain parishes of the south tithes have been excessive, and have observed no equity for the poor, the husbandman, or the manufacturer; and evidence is offered to prove this charge on oath.

"Will you deny the fact? Will you justify the fact? Will you inquire into it?

"It is alleged that in certain parishes of the south ratages for tithes have greatly and unconscionably increased; and evidence is offered to prove this charge on oath. Will you deny the fact? Will you justify the fact? Will you inquire into it?

"It is alleged that in certain parishes of the south the parishioners have duly and legally set out their tithe, and given due notice; but that no persons have attended

on the part of the proctor or parson, under expectation, it is apprehended, of getting some new method of recovery, tending to deprive the parish of the benefit of its ancient right, that of setting out their tithe; and evidence is offered to prove this charge on oath.

"It is alleged that in certain parishes of the south tithe-farmers have oppressed and do oppress his majesty's subjects by various extortions, abuses of law, or breaches of the same; and evidence is offered to prove this charge on oath. Here, once more, I ask you, will you deny the fact? Will you justify the fact? Will you inquire into it?

In developing his views the orator made it clear that he did not intend to deprive the clergy of the established church of just compensation, and he pointed to the methods in Holland and Scotland where the clergy was compensated at a fixed salary. And in concluding he appealed to the better nature of the house in a passage of splendid beauty and eloquence:

"Let bigotry and schism, the zealot's fire, the high priest's intolerance through all their discordancy tremble, while an enlightened parliament, with arms of general protection, overarches the whole community, and roots the Protestant ascendency in the sovereign mercy of its nature. Laws of operation, perhaps necessary, certainly severe, you have put forth already, but your great engine of power you have hitherto kept back; that engine, which the pride of the bigot, nor the spite of the zealot, nor the ambition of the high priest, nor the arsenal of the conqueror, nor the inquisition, with its jaded rack and pale criminal, never thought of; the engine which, armed with physical and moral blessings, comes forth and overlays mankind with services—the engine of redress; this is government, and this is the only description of government worth your ambition. Were I to raise you to a great act, I should not recur to the history of other nations; I should recite your

own acts, and set you in emulation with yourselves. Do you remember that night when you gave your country a free trade, and with your own hands opened all her harbors? That night when you gave her a free constitution, and broke the chains of a century, while England, eclipsed at your glory and your island, rose, as it were, from its bed and got nearer to the sun? In the arts that polish life, the inventions that accommodate, the manufactures which adorn it, you will be for many years inferior to some other parts of Europe; but, to nurse a growing people, to mature a struggling though hardy community, to mold, to multiply, to consolidate, to inspire and to exalt a young nation, be these your barbarous accomplishments."

This appeal, however, failed to affect favorably the action of the house however much it undoubtedly impressed it, and Grattan renewed his fight on the tithe evils from time to time, but without avail. The fact that the Catholics had now been given the right to own property and consequently compelled to pay tithes to a religion they did not adhere to was used by Grattan as an additional argument in favor of some reformation in the system. He argued that this would divide the country on religious as well as political grounds, an evil he considered dangerous to the state. Denounced by the clergy, he retorted with fine scorn and sarcasm, reflecting upon the hypocrisy of gentlemen who appeared to wear the livery of the court of Heaven to enrich themselves at the expense of the poor.

The year 1789 was to be a fateful one for Ireland. It was the year of the king's illness and the controversy regarding the regency. The contest in England grew out of the disposition of the Whigs to place the

prince in absolute control because of his friendly relations with Fox and Sheridan, while Pitt, posing as the champion of the king, and determined upon holding his own authority, insisted on restrictions. The Grattan following in Ireland had strong leanings toward the Whigs, and it was the belief of Grattan that with the prince in authority much might be accomplished for Ireland. He had a program of reforms which comprehended a pension bill, a place bill, a responsibility bill, and a new police bill, and the possibility of the accession to unrestricted authority of the prince was rich in hope. Lord Clare, notwithstanding the fact that Grattan's party suddenly became the majority through the accession of the sycophants who crawl into the circle of authority, led a bitter fight in behalf of Pitt, thereby feathering his nest for the future; and Lord Buckingham, the lord lieutenant took his stand naturally with Pitt and Clare.

In this contest Grattan carried the house with him and an address to the prince was voted asking him to assume the government of Ireland. This precipitated an immediate conflict with Buckingham, who refused, on advice of Clare, to transmit the address. This refusal was sharply rebuked by the house on motion of Grattan, and the lord lieutenant was censured for his conduct by parliament. Instead of resigning after this, Buckingham, in ugly mood, held on, and set to work to corrupt the parliament by selling peerages for money and using the money in buying up members of the house of commons. In anticipation of a possible discontinuance of parliament by act of the lord lieutenant, Grattan proposed a short money bill, and supplies were granted for two months only. This done,

he introduced his reform measures and began to press them upon the house and with every prospect of success.

Then came the announcement of the recovery of the king. This was a tragedy for Ireland. Pitt, who had been affronted by the action of the Irish parliament, entered heartily into Buckingham's policy of corruption, and the fair weather friends of reform flocked back to their old Castle standard. Henceforth all propositions of reformation were to be easily voted down. So serious had the situation now become that the friends of the revolution of 1782 organized the Whig club with the object of obtaining the internal reform of parliament and of preventing the consummation of a union, which had now been openly broached. Before considering Grattan's persistent fight against the policy of the government, we shall take up the one reform which he was able to effect through his clever manipulation of the Catholic question.

V

This question became vital about 1790. It was forced upon the Irish government, partly because of the revolutionary uprising in France which had frightened the minister, and partly because of the concessions made to the Catholics of England. About this time, following a brutal rebuff from Westmoreland, then lord lieutenant, the Catholics sent a deputation to England, with John Keogh at it head, to present to the government a list of the penal laws and ask for their repeal. This deputation was able to carry back to Ireland the assurance that there would be no objec-

tion if the Irish parliament opened the profession of law to Catholics, and conferred eligibility for the offices of sheriff, county magistrates and grand jurors.

With this assurance the Catholics applied to Grattan. Broad enough to subordinate any desire for personal glory to the success of the Catholic cause he strongly advised that his championship of the proposed measure would make it a party question and would prejudice the government, which was in the majority. After a stormy series of discussions, in which Grattan participated on the side of Catholic concession, the High Church party, with Lord Clare at their head, were shocked to hear in the message from the throne in January, 1793, the suggestion that the Catholic question be taken up and considered with the view to such legislation as would be satisfactory to Catholic subjects. A little later the government brought in a bill which gave the Catholics a vote at elections, enabled them to sit as grand jurors, authorized the endowment of schools and colleges, permitted them to carry arms when possessed of a certain amount of property, empowered them to hold civil offices under certain restrictions, and disallowed challenges against them on petit juries. This bill, while furiously fought by the notorious Doctor Duigenan, made progress, and in February, the final debate began. It was assailed by the bigots because it smacked slightly of toleration, and by Grattan and Curran on the ground that it should not stop short of making the Catholic subject eligible to a seat in parliament. Grattan's speech on this occasion was a magnificent argument for toleration and he is described by eye witnesses as having spoken with "a divine enthusiasm."

"Conquerors, or tyrants proceeding from conquerors," he said, "have scarcely ever for any length of time governed by those partial disabilities; but a people, so to govern itself, or rather, under the name of government, so to exclude itself, the industrious, the opulent, the useful; that part that feeds you with its industry, and supplies you with its taxes, weaves that you may wear, and plows that you may eat: to exclude a body so useful, so numerous, and that forever; and, in the meantime to tax them ad libitum, and occasionally to pledge their lives and fortunes—for what? For their disfranchisement. It can not be done; continue it, and you expect from your laws what it were blasphemy to ask from your Maker. Such a policy always turns on the inventor, and bruises him under the stroke of the scepter or the sword, or sinks him under accumulation of debt and loss of dominion. Need I go to instances? What was the case of Ireland, enslaved for a century, and withered and blasted by her Protestant ascendency, like a shattered oak scathed on its hill by the fires of its own intolerance? What lost England America but such a policy? An attempt to bind men by a parliament in which they are not represented; such an attempt as some would now continue to practise on the Catholics, and involve England. What was it saved Ireland to England but the contrary policy? I have seen these principles of liberty verified by yourselves. I have heard addresses from counties and cities here on the subject of the slave trade to Mr. Wilberforce, thanking him for his efforts to set free a distressed people; has your pity traversed leagues of sea to sit down by the black boy on the coast of Guinea; and have you forgot the man at home, by your side, your brother? Come, then, and by one great act cancel this code, and prepare your mind for that bright order of time which now seems to touch your condition."

The bill, with some alterations, passed and became a law, thereby placing the Catholic, in theory, on a

level with the Protestant in many respects. While the measure was fathered by the government, the power that loomed behind, cleverly pulling on the ropes, was Henry Grattan, and this was thoroughly understood both by the Catholics and by the liberals of England. Edmund Burke wrote him that the passage of the law was "the greatest effort of his genius" and that his great abilities were "never more distinguished or in a better cause."

It was the hope of Grattan at the time of the passage of this measure that further concessions would be speedily made, but within a year he was sadly disillusioned by the Fitzwilliam incident—an incident which contributed not a little to the spread of the revolutionary movement.

Lord Fitzwilliam was a nobleman by nature, broad, tolerant and in hearty sympathy with the Catholics in their contention for equal rights. When in 1794 he was sent to Ireland as lord lieutenant it was with the distinct agreement that concessions were to follow. This was understood by Pitt in England and by Grattan and the Catholics in Ireland. So thoroughly was this understood that efforts were made to have Grattan accept office as chancellor of the exchequer. The whole arrangement was gone over at a dinner in London attended by Pitt, Grattan, Fitzwilliam and others. While Pitt's attitude at the dinner implanted in Grattan a feeling of distrust, he still believed that the English minister was acting in good faith. When Fitzwilliam reached Dublin he was received with great enthusiasm and hailed as a deliverer. This was on January fourth, 1794. In reply to the addresses that poured in upon him from all parts of the country he

frankly avowed that Catholic restrictions would be speedily removed. Pitt, it should be understood, was informed of the nature of these addresses and the replies. In his address from the throne Lord Fitzwilliam reiterated his pledge. In anticipation of the fulfilment of the government's pledge, Grattan, early in February, moved that two hundred thousand pounds be granted for the purpose of raising men for his majesty's fleet, and the motion was agreed to without a division. Nine days later Grattan obtained leave to bring in a bill for the relief of the Catholics and with the opposition of but three members. It looked as though a new era had dawned for Ireland.

Then startling rumors began to float about Dublin to the effect that Lord Fitzwilliam was to be recalled. The very idea seemed preposterous. The pledge was unmistakable. The government had been generously voted two hundred thousand pounds in a spirit of gratitude. To assume that Pitt could stoop to an act so contemptible seemed impossible. However, the house took the precaution of passing resolutions thanking Fitzwilliam for this conduct, and the entire house marched to the Castle to present them. In less than three months after reaching Dublin, Fitzwilliam was recalled!

A miserable pretext for the dismissal was found in the turning out of office of two wretched incompetents who had been runners for the execrable Clare and slaves of the Castle. In the English house of lords Fitzwilliam declared that he had been dismissed because of his affiliation with Grattan and his party. The former lord lieutenant, in his speech on that occasion, disclosed to the English parliament the precise arrange-

ments under which he had taken office, and Pitt, unable to enter a denial, took recourse in a cowardly silence. In the Irish house, Grattan sought an early opportunity to verify the story of Fitzwilliam, this being done in April, and through the presentation of a motion for a committee on the state of the nation which declared "that Catholic emancipation was not only the concession of the British cabinet, but its precise arrangement." The speech of Grattan in support of his motion was delivered with much heat to an excited audience, and the galleries broke into the wildest applause in response to the orator's denunciation of the perfidy of Pitt; and when in conclusion he defiantly declared, "I am here to confront my enemies and stand by my country," the tumult in the galleries was such that the speaker was forced to clear the house of all but members to restore the slightest semblance of order. This infamous trick of Pitt's had a remarkable effect upon the people. Dublin went into mourning when Fitzwilliam left. The revolutionary element was recruited from the ranks of the disgusted. And Henry Grattan was forced to the reluctant realization that his fight now would have to be for nothing less than the preservation of the parliament to which he had given its independence.

VI

The fight for the preservation of parliamentary independence was forced by the corrupt methods of Buckingham and the open avowal of his successor, Lord Westmoreland, that he proposed to govern after the fashion of his predecessor. From the moment of

that avowal Grattan enlisted for the war, and during the next seven years we find him exposing the corruption of the government and the tendency of its policy at every opportunity. It can not be said that Ireland drifted into the union without warning. Every step in that direction was heralded by the lips of the father of parliamentary independence. We shall find, however, that the public opinion of Ireland was not to be considered in the transaction to which Pitt was looking forward, and that all arrangements were to be made between the minister and the members he should buy. As early as January, 1790, we find Grattan sounding the note of warning in a speech following that of the lord lieutenant, who had announced in the address from the throne that the policies of Buckingham would be adopted by his administration. In explaining his inability to assent to that portion of the address, Grattan gave the house a bill of particulars relative to the happenings of the Buckingham régime.

"This was the man. You remember his entry into the capital; trampling on the hearse of the Duke of Rutland, and seated in a triumphal car, drawn by public credulity; on one side fallacious hope, and on the other many-mouthed profession; a figure with two faces, one turned to the treasury, and the other presented to the people; and with a double tongue speaking contradictory languages.

"The minister alights; justice looked up to him with empty hopes, and peculation faints with idle alarms: he finds the city a prey to an unconstitutional police—he continues it; he finds the country overburdened with a shameful pension list—he increases it; he finds the house of commons swarming with placemen—he multiplies them; he finds the salary of the secretary increased to prevent a pension—he grants a pension; he

finds the kingdom drained by absentee employments and by compensations to buy them home—he gives the best reversion in the country to an absentee, his brother. He finds the government, at different times, had disgraced itself by creating sinecures to gratify corrupt affection—he makes two commissioners of the rolls and gives one of them to another brother; he finds the second council to the commissioners put down because useless—he revives it; he finds the boards of accounts and stamps annexed by public compact—he divides them; he finds three resolutions declaring that seven commissioners are sufficient—he makes nine; he finds the country has suffered by some peculations in the ordnance—he increases the salary of officers, and gives the places to members—members of parliament."

Immediately after the Westmoreland administration went in, a significant rearrangement of the galleries of the house of commons was made, reducing the space for spectators by half. To do this it was necessary to destroy the symmetry of the interior, and for this no explanation was forthcoming. The matter however was called to the attention of the house by Grattan, who grasped the ominous significance of the proceeding, calculated to minimize the embarrassment of mercenaries gazed down upon by honest men. The very month of Westmoreland's arrival we find Grattan forcing the fighting by offering resolutions against increasing the number of the commissioners of the revenue and dividing the board and providing that these resolutions be laid before the king with the request that he communicate the names of the persons who recommended the increase and the division. His speech in offering the resolutions was a frank reflection upon the honesty of government. His first sentence was a thunderbolt.

"We combat a project to govern this country by corruption," he began. "It is not like the supremacy of the British parliament—a thunderbolt; nor like the twenty propositions, a mine of artifice; but without the force of the one or the fraud of the other, will answer all the purposes of both."

And again:

"They began with a contempt of popularity, they proceeded to a contempt of fame, and they now vibrate on the last string, a contempt of virtue."

And again:

"I will not say that ministers went into the open streets with cockades in their hats and drums in their hands; but I do say they were as public, and had as openly broken terms with decorum, as if they had so paraded in college-green, with their business lettered on their foreheads."

And further on he says:

"I have shown this measure to be a disregard to the sense of this house, for the purpose of extending influence; this leads me from the particular subject to the general policy. The nature of this policy I have described; the ultimate consequences I shall not now detail, but I will mention one which seems to include all. I know you say—union; no, it is not the extinction of the Irish parliament, but its disgraceful continuation. Parliament under such a project will live, but live to no one useful purpose. The minister will defeat her attempts by corruption, and deter the repetition of her attempts by threatening the repetition of the expenses of corruption. Having been long the bawd, corruption will become the sage and honest admonitress of the na-

tion. She will advise her no more to provoke the minister to rob the subject; she will advise her to serve in order to save; to be a slave on the principle of good housewifery; then will parliament, instead of controlling the court, administer to its licentiousness; provide villas and furniture for the servants of the Castle, afford a place army to obnoxious members, accommodate with cruel and contradictory clauses the commissioners of the revenue, or feed on public rapine the viceroy's clanship. Parliament, that giant that purged these islands of a race of tyrants whose breed it was the misfortune of England to preserve and of Ireland to adopt; parliament, whose head has for ages commerced with the wisdom of the gods and whose foot has spoken thunder and deposition to the oppressor, will, like the sacred giant, stand a public spectacle shorn of its strength, or rather, like that giant, he will retain his strength for the amusement of his enemies, and do feats of ignominious power to gratify an idle and hostile court; and these walls, where once the public weal contended, and the patriot strove, will resemble the ruin of some Italian temple, and abound, not with senators, but with animals of prey in the guise of senators, chattering their pert debates, and disgracing those seats which once belonged to the people."

It was inevitable that charges so serious should give grave umbrage to the government and its hired men, and during the course of the discussion, it was suggested, by way of intimidation, that either Grattan had made false charges or the minister was corrupt, and that one or the other should be punished. This instantly brought Grattan to his feet with a hearty assent.

"Bring against us your proofs of our sedition," he exclaimed, "and I will bring against you my proofs of your corruption; proofs of attempts to intimidate mem-

bers in the discharge of their duties; proof of your tampering with members, and proofs of your sale of honors."

The attempt of some of the Castle hirelings to justify the course of the government called forth one of the most furious retorts to be found in any of Grattan's speeches:

"Sir, that corruption should be practised by ministers is a common case; that it should be carried under the present administration to that most extraordinary and alarming excess is the peculiar misfortune of the country, and the peculiar disgrace of her government, in their present venal hands. But that this should be justified—that it should be justified in parliament—corruption expressly justified in parliament. Sir, the woman who keeps her secret is received, but she who boasts her shame is the outcast of society; in these cases the ear corrupts the mind, and the sound haunts the soul with the warm image of pollution. That corruption should be the conversation of your cabinet, the topic of your closet, the soul and spirit of your table talk, I can well conceive; but to introduce here your abominable rites, to bring Mammon out of your closet and fall down and worship him in the high court of parliament—Sir, how far must the ministry have gone when even here it bursts out its horrid suggestion!"

The utter shamelessness of the government, which had the hearty sympathy of Pitt, was manifested on this occasion by the defeat of the resolutions and the refusal of the government to proceed against Grattan because of the open charges he had made.

Undaunted by this defeat, and determined that the people should thoroughly understand the situation, Grattan returned to the attack in less than three weeks

with a motion for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into the sale of peerages and the use of the money thus attained in the purchase of government seats in the commons. In his speech, in support of the motion, he again threw a bomb into the Castle camp with his first sentence—an impressive reiteration:

"Sir, we continue to combat the project to govern this country by corruption."

In concluding his remarks Grattan made his charges so specific that no government, unless wholly and hopelessly depraved—and it was the government of William Pitt—would have failed to accept the challenge and have agreed to the inquiry:

"We charge them publicly, and in the face of their country, with making corrupt agreements for the sale of peerages; for doing which we say they are impeachable. We charge them with corrupt agreements for the disposal of the money arising from the sale, to purchase for the servants of the Castle seats in the assembly of the people; for doing which we say they are impeachable. We charge them with committing these offenses not in one, nor in two, but in many instances; for which complication of offenses we say they are impeachable; guilty of a systematic endeavor to undermine the constitution in violation of the laws of the land. We pledge ourselves to convict them; we dare them to go into an inquiry; we do not affect to treat them other than as public malefactors; we speak to them in a style of the most mortifying and humiliating defiance. We pronounce them to be public criminals. Will they dare to deny the charge? I call upon, and dare the ostensible member to rise in his place and say on his honor that he does not believe such corrupt agreements have taken place. I wait for a specific answer."

The only specific answer made by government to

these specific charges was the defeat of the motion for an inquiry by a vote of one hundred and forty-four to eighty-eight. Four days later, in speaking on another subject, and referring to the flagrant corruption of the government, Grattan quoted a member as having said that in the former speech he should have been stopped; and then deliberately he reiterated the charges as given in the extract just quoted, and concluded:

"I repeat these charges now; and if anything more severe was on the former occasion expressed, I beg to be reminded of it, and I will again repeat it. Why do not you expel me now? Why not send me to the bar of the lords? Where is your adviser? Going out of this house I shall repeat my sentiments, that his majesty's ministers are guilty of impeachable offenses; and, advancing to the bar of the lords, I shall repeat those sentiments; or, if the Tower is to be my habitation, I will there meditate the impeachment of these ministers, and return, not to capitulate, but to punish."

Little wonder that the Frouds and Fishers, the historical defenders of the crime of the union, have not the hardihood to deny that the act was committed through the most disgraceful governmental corruption, with records such as have been handed down in the speeches of Grattan to confront and convict them. On every possible opportunity Grattan returned to the charge in an effort to discover some slight sensibility in the ministers that might impel them to challenge proof—but they preferred the charges to the proof. In 1793 we find him making three separate efforts to secure parliamentary reform, and in every instance reiterating his direct charges against the honesty of the ministry.

"I say the reform of parliament is made irresistible by the minister's offenses," he said. "Have we forgotten how the present ministry came into power? They were made the ministers of the present lord lieutenant because they had been the panders of the predecessors. Have we forgotten how they went about administering to every venal person the wages of corruption? Have we forgotten how, in one stroke, they created fifteen new parliamentary provisions, declared in this house by their friends to have been made for no other purpose than that of buying the members? And do such men talk of the dignity of parliament? Have we forgotten that other act of theirs—that misdemeanor for which they are impeachable, and of which they are so notoriously guilty—that charged, arraigned, put down publicly and repeatedly, they have not dared to deny it? I mean the sale of peerages for sums of money conditioned to be expended for the procuring of seats in this house for persons named by the minister; and do these men talk of character?"

The failure of the attempt at parliamentary reform sealed the fate of the parliament. In 1793, when Grattan made his fight for reform, there were three hundred members, of whom two hundred were selected by one hundred individuals, and at least fifty were chosen by ten individuals. When, in addition to this tragic condition, the infamous policy of the ministry in selling peerages to buy seats for governmental purposes is taken into consideration, it is not at all surprising that the ultimate result was union.

Meanwhile the country was torn with the most bitter religious dissensions, the outrages of the Orangemen augmenting the growing army of the United Irishmen, the militant remnant of the Volunteers who had despaired of the liberty of Ireland under British rule,

secretly preparing to revolt. When parliament met in 1796 a subservient house was quite ready to support the government in the most violent measures of repression it might see fit to put forth. An insurrection bill was passed which imprisoned the peasantry in their houses from sunset to sunrise. This was supplemented by an indemnity bill which absolved magistrates from all their illegal acts. This made the magistrates absolute dictators and deprived the citizen of the least semblance of liberty or legal rights. These measures, born of the brain of the brutal Clare, were described by Curran as a "bloody code." During the course of the year Grattan spoke in favor of strengthening the country and securing unanimity by granting to all subjects the blessings of the constitution regardless of religion, but he was overwhelmingly voted down; and four days later the writ of habeas corpus was suspended. In protesting against this act of despotism Grattan said:

"As to your political liberty, the influence of the crown seems to have corrected that blessing; as to your civil liberty, this bill, added to the bills you passed last session, seems to correct that blessing also. By the influence of the crown the minister becomes the master of your legislation, and, by those bills, he becomes master of your persons. Now, after this, where are the blessings of your constitution? You have deprived the subject of political liberty, and you now deprive him of civil liberty, lest he should exercise that liberty to reform abuses; lest he should use that liberty he has left to recover the liberty he has lost. I protest against the system; it is abominable; you feel it to be so, and take these measures of power because you know the people can not be reconciled to it but by power; because you feel you have lost the confidence of the great body of the people."

This speech was considered seditious by the government and has greatly shocked some of the fastidious English historians who have found nothing but the admirable in the perfidy of Pitt, the savagery of Clare, or the corruption of Castlereagh. The conditions became worse and worse. There was no longer any legal right that government felt bound to respect. Liberty had been destroyed and a despotism established. The prisons were full to overflowing. Soldiers were being poured into the island. Not content with all that had been done, General Lake, commanding the northern district of Ireland, assuming the airs of a dictator, issued an amazing proclamation calling upon the people to surrender all arms in their possession to the English soldiers. Against this outrage Grattan protested with all the vehemence of his nature.

"I ask you now, will you submit to such an act?" he demanded. "Will you sit by with folded arms and suffer the deputy of an English minister to disarm the Irish? Will you suffer him to enslave your country? Will you suffer him to disgrace her? Will you surrender to him her character, her constitution, her arms, and, in that word, everything dear to Irishmen?"

But the eloquence of a Grattan could accomplish nothing as against the gold of the ministry, and thus the infamies practised by the government continued to recruit the army of the United Irishmen.

It should be said that Grattan had no sympathy with the purposes of this organization, and that he and his friends, although approached with the proposition that they cast their lot with the revolutionary organization, refused to countenance it in any way. At the

same time he, better perhaps than most, realized that the policy of the minister was making the revolutionary sentiment more formidable than it had ever before been in a generation. At this juncture Grattan found himself in a quandary. He could not refrain from lifting up his voice in the exposure of Irish wrongs and in the demand for the righting of these wrongs. And yet he knew that his powerful philippics against the government could not but have their effect upon the masses of the people, thereby driving the more impulsive into the revolutionary ranks. He drew back in horror from the contemplation of the bloody uprising that he foresaw. And yet to join in measures for the suppression of rebellion would be tantamount to locking arms with the ministers he despised as enemies to the constitution of his country. The preceding seven years had made it all too plain that he could accomplish nothing more, at least at the time, by continuing his fight. His following had sunk to an insignificant number. This situation led to the determination of himself and friends to secede from parliament. The announcement was reserved for the conclusion of a final fight in favor of parliamentary reform.

Thus on May fifteenth, 1797, Henry Grattan passed from the parliament to which he had given its independence, only to return, a sadly broken man, to witness its utter destruction. It has sometimes been said that he failed to exert himself as he should to stem the tide of corruption which was to overwhelm his country. The record of his seven years' fight and the citations from his speeches surely exonerate him from the charge of apathy or indifference, and establish

beyond all doubt that he did all within the power of mortal to save his country.

VII

Worn by worry and disease, Grattan, upon his secession from parliament, resigned from the yeomanry corps, and went to Castle Connel, a watering place in the county of Limerick, on the borders of the Shannon. After a brief sojourn there he retired to his country place, Tinnehinch, in the hope that his jaded nerves might recover in the tranquil surroundings. Alas, all tranquillity had departed from Ireland. The country was now in the throes of rebellion and no man was safe from the spies and informers of the Castle, least of all the great orator whom they had been unable either to bribe or buy. Grattan appears to have appreciated the delicacy of his position and to have been on the lookout for traps that might be set for him. One of the wretched informers of the period actually called upon him at Tinnehinch in an effort to trap him into joining the United Irishmen. During his absence in England the ruffians that swarmed over the country terrorized Mrs. Grattan, who remained alone with the servants at Tinnehinch. She was threatened with violence, attempts were made to trap her into saying something that might be used against her husband, and in the night the steps of prowlers were often heard around the house. On the return of Grattan the spies, informers and gunmen of authority were again set upon him, and during these trying times he took the precaution to have arms in reach at all hours for the protection of his life.

Beset with every danger, his life threatened, his reputation assailed, his country despoiled of her liberties, and his parliament doomed already to destruction, the health of Grattan broke down completely. His condition became such that he was forbidden to talk politics, to read or write, and owing to his nervous malady every effort was made to keep the developments in Dublin from him. He went to England and the Isle of Wight, but without improvement.

Thus near the close of 1799 he returned to Tinnehinch, a feeble, prematurely old man. Hardly had he reached his home when deputations of his friends began to pour in upon him with importunities that he reenter parliament and do all he could to prevent the consummation of the union which was then under discussion in Dublin. Anxious though he was to defend the life of his parliament, he was impelled by the desperate state of his health to give a refusal. A little later, however, a vacancy was created by death in the representation of Wicklow, and the importunities of his friends being renewed, and Mrs. Grattan joining in the effort to persuade him as an imperative duty to his country, he gave a reluctant consent. He was taken to Dublin as an invalid, and unable to bear even the noise of a hotel, a place was found for him in a private house, where he retired to await the election. His friends were especially anxious for him to be present at the opening of parliament when a stormy and bitter debate on the project of the union was expected, and special permission was given for holding the election after midnight on the day of the opening.

That night the debate began in all its fury, the brilliant Plunkett leading the national party—and Grattan

was not there. The moment however that the return on the election was signed, a man was despatched on horseback for Dublin. It was five o'clock in the morning when he knocked loudly on the door of Grattan's lodging. The orator had been ill all night. "Oh, they have come," he exclaimed, "why will they not let me die in peace?" Mrs. Grattan insisted that he go immediately to the house of commons. His attendants dressed him as they would have dressed a child, and helped him down the stairs. He went to the parlor and loaded his pistols, as he had reasons to fear assassination. They wrapped a blanket about him, put him in a sedan chair, and Mrs. Grattan watched his departure with the feeling that she might never see him again. She was reassured somewhat by the news that Grattan's friends had agreed to come forward in the event of a quarrel and take his place. "My husband can not die better than in defense of his country," she replied proudly.

It was now seven o'clock and the debate had been in progress all night, Plunkett had delivered his marvelous speech of protest, and Eagan had risen to speak, when suddenly, the doors flew open, and there on the threshold stood Grattan, thin, weak, emaciated, supported by two friends. As he started slowly down the aisle to be sworn, the entire house, including Castlereagh, rose instinctively as a token of respect. A dramatic figure he made, dressed in the Volunteer uniform, blue with red cuffs and collars, and with a cocked hat on his head. As his friends gathered about him, one of them, noticing his hat upon his head, reminded him of the rules. "Do not mind me, I know what to do," he replied petulantly. He looked about

defiantly as he proceeded down the aisle and did not remove his hat until he had almost reached the table. After taking the oath, he sat down beside Plunkett, and Eagan resumed his interrupted speech.

The physical condition of Grattan at this time and for months before has been given in some detail for the purpose of emphasizing the utter unreliability of the pro-British writers of history in dealing with Irish subjects. Within the last three years Mr. J. R. Fisher has written a volume on *The End of the Irish Parliament,* to which reference has already been made in the study of Flood, in which every patriot is derided and such characters as Castlereagh and Lord Clare and Pitt are whitewashed after the approved Tory fashion. Mr. Fisher must have known something of the physical condition of Grattan on the dreary morning that he returned to parliament, and he could easily have satisfied himself by turning to the correspondence of Mrs. Grattan and ascertaining. And yet treating of the dramatic entrance of Grattan, he ascribes his feeble manner to an affected imitation of Chatham.

At length Eagan concluded, and Grattan, obtaining permission to speak while seated, began his reply to Pitt:

"The gentleman who spoke last but one has spoken the pamphlet of the English minister—I answer that minister. He has published two celebrated productions, in both of which he proclaims his intolerance of the constitution of Ireland. He concurs with the men whom he has hanged in thinking the constitution a grievance, and differs from them in the remedy only; they proposing to substitute a republic and he proposing to substitute the

yoke of the British parliament; the one turns rebel to the king, the minister a rebel to the constitution."

Proceeding then in an argumentative manner, in contrast to the impassioned style employed a little before by Plunkett, he took up one by one the arguments of the minister, insisting that the settlement of 1782 was considered final by both countries, defending the position of the Irish parliament in the regency controversy as justifiable and proper, and answering the objection that a separate parliament would cripple the empire in the event of war, by declaring the policy proposed by the minister more conducive to disloyalty.

"I will put this question to my country," he said. "I will suppose her at the bar, and I will ask her, will you fight for a union as you would for a constitution? Will you fight for that lords, and that commons, who in the last century took away your trade, and in the present, your constitution, as for that king, lords and commons who have restored them? Well, the minister has destroyed this constitution; to destroy is easy; the edifices of the mind, like the fabrics of marble, require an age to build but ask only minutes to precipitate; and, as the fall of both is the effort of no time, so neither is it a business of any strength; a pick-ax and a common laborer will do the one—a little lawyer, a little pimp, a wicked minister, the other."

He then took up the objections to the union, showing that it was not union, no identification of peoples, because of the exclusion of the Catholics, that it merely meant "an extinction of the constitution and an exclusion of the people." He followed this by arguing the insincerity of the British promises regarding Catholic emancipation, the abolition of tithes, and lib-

erality toward Irish commerce—all of which he dubbed as bribes—by showing the antagonism of the government to these very measures during the preceding decade.

"Against such a proposition," he exclaimed in conclusion, "were I expiring on the floor, I would beg to utter my last breath, and record my dying testimony."

A few days later the message of the lord lieutenant, Cornwallis, recommending a union, was read and another acrimonious debate resulted, lasting all night and until noon the next day. On this occasion Grattan again assailed the proposition with a great argument, free from invective, but invincible in its reasoning.

"The question is not such as occupied you of old," he said in conclusion. "Old Poyning's law, not peculation, not plunder, not an embargo, not a Catholic bill, not a reform bill—it is your being—it is more—it is your life to come, whether you will go with the Castle at your head to the tomb of Charlemont and the Volunteers, and erase his epitaph; or whether your children shall go to your graves, saying a venal, a military court, attacked the liberties of the Irish, and here lie the bones of the honorable dead men who saved their country. Such an epitaph is a nobility which the king can not give his slaves; it is a glory which the crown can not give the king."

In a little less than two weeks after this debate the articles of union were presented, and Isaac Corry was selected by the government to defend them. This man had commenced his public career as a patriot and had frequently been a guest of Grattan at Tinnehinch; had written complimentary verse to his idol; and then had turned traitor under the influence of the Castle. In the course of his speech he went out of his way to

attack his former leader with great bitterness, and there is every reason to believe that he was instructed to do so by the Castle party. Grattan entered the house while Corry was in the midst of a vehement denunciation, and as he took his seat, he turned to his neighbor with the remark, "I see they wish to make an attack upon my life, and the sooner the better." The moment Corry resumed his seat Grattan was up and at him like a lion.

"Has the gentleman done?" he exclaimed. "Has he completely done? He was unparliamentary from the beginning to the end of his speech. There was scarce a word he uttered that was not a violation of the privileges of the house; but I did not call him to order—why? Because the limited talents of some men render it impossible for them to be severe without being unparliamentary. But before I sit down I shall show him how to be severe and parliamentary at the same time. On any other occasion I should consider myself justifiable in treating with silent contempt anything which might fall from that honorable member; but there are times when the insignificance of the accuser is lost in the magnitude of the accusation."

Then followed one of the most terrific arraignments ever heard by any parliamentary body, more crushing than the philippic against Flood—so overwhelming that it fairly thrilled an unwilling house which sat as though stupefied while the great orator lashed not only the insignificant Corry, but the flagrant corruption of the government. Even Castlereagh sat like one electrified, lost in admiring wonder. The moment he concluded Grattan left the house, and in passing Plunkett, who was watching him anxiously because of his

physical condition, gave him a reassuring clasp of the hand which led Plunkett to remark that the affair had done more for Grattan's health than all the medicine he had taken. A duel resulted and Corry was shot in the arm. Ten years later, while Grattan was at Brighton, Corry called at the home of the man who had given him such an unmerciful drubbing, and, although the Grattan family wished to turn him away, Grattan himself, who had seen him approaching, went to the door and took his hand.

A few days after the Corry incident the articles of union were called up for second reading. The fight to prevent the destruction of the parliament was now manifestly hopeless, although Grattan returned to the attack with his accustomed brilliance. Never was he more touching or more impressive than when he spoke his last word for the parliament which was his child:

"The constitution may be for a time so lost; the character of the country can not be so lost. The ministers of the crown will, or may, perhaps, find that it is not so easy to put down forever an ancient and respectable nation by abilities, however great, and by power and by corruption, however irresistible; liberty may repair her golden beams, and with redoubled heart animate the country; the cry of loyalty will not long continue against the principles of liberty; loyalty is a noble, a judicious and a capacious principle, but in these countries loyalty, distinct from liberty, is corruption.

"The cry of the connection will not in the end avail against the principles of liberty. Connection is a wise and profound policy; but connection without an Irish parliament is connection without its own principle, without analogy of condition, without the pride of honor that should attend it; is innovation, is peril, is subjugation—not connection.

"The cry of disaffection will not in the end avail against the principle of liberty.

"Yet I do not give up my country—I see her in a swoon, but she is not dead—though in her tomb she lies helpless and motionless, still there is on her lips a spirit of life, and on her cheek a glow of beauty—

> "Thou art not conquered; beauty's ensign yet
> Is crimson on thy lips, and in thy cheeks,
> And death's pale flag is not advanced there.

"While a plank of the vessel sticks together I will not leave her; let the courtier present his flimsy sail, and carry the light bark of his faith with every new breath of wind—I will remain anchored here with fidelity to the fortunes of my country, faithful to her freedom, faithful to her fall."

After the consummation of the union, Grattan, a melancholy wreck of his former self, retired to Tinnehinch where he devoted himself to the education of his children. His solitude was cheered by his love of music and literature. Often in the mornings he would walk, a mile distant, to an old Catholic churchyard, beautifully situated on an eminence overlooking the Waterfall River. There beside the ivy-grown and crumbling walls, beneath the shade of mighty trees, he would sit for hours, listening to the murmur of the water. His children, who often accompanied him, sometimes saw him start into fits of frenzy, or sit with bowed head and in tears. In time, however, his grief was moderated, and his health improved. Summer and winter he was wont to go, on rising, directly to the river to take a plunge, and thus, all unconsciously, he was gathering strength for the battles for his country that still awaited him.

VIII

The moment the Irish parliament was destroyed Charles James Fox, an ardent admirer of Grattan, urged him to enter the house of commons in London, and form the nucleus of an Irish party which should work in conjunction with the Whigs for Catholic emancipation. It had been one of the ambitions of Grattan's life to contribute to the liberation of the larger portion of his fellow countrymen and the importunities of Fox impelled him to enter the imperial parliament in the hope of accomplishing something in that direction. From the time of his entrance in 1804 until his death in 1815 he threw himself heart and soul into the fight for emancipation and in the interval led with brilliancy and eloquence many a forlorn hope. The genius which had so impressed the Irish people instantly made a profound impression on the statesmen of Saint Stephens and he was accorded first rank among the great orators whose voices were then heard within that ancient chamber. The part so impressively played by him during these years will be adequately covered in the study of O'Connell, who led the fight in Ireland. Suffice it to say now that in the very last year of his life he was found fighting with undiminished fire. Old, and broken with toil and trouble, he led the fight for the Relief bill of 1819, which was defeated in the commons by but three votes. As evidence of his fighting spirit at that time we have but to refer to his masterful speech on that occasion and his indignant challenge to English arrogance.

"The objection that the Irish are below the privileges that emancipation would confer," he said, "I scorn to answer. You should answer it; for that argument would say that you had governed the Irish so ill as to put them below the blessings of a free constitution. They want bread, it is said, and not liberty; and then you leave them without bread and without liberty—and here your conduct is as inconsistent as your assertion is unwarrantable. You give the elective franchise to the people so described, and you refuse the representative to those who are not pretended to come within that description.

"The objection that the Roman Catholics do not love liberty, I despise equally. What—in these walls to say so? In these walls that have witnessed their confirmation of Magna Charta thirty times, and in this city whose tower guards that great sacred instrument of liberty? There are now extant of those who trace themselves to the signature of the Charta three families; they are Roman Catholics; they are petitioners, and they desire to share that liberty which their ancestors gave to the people of England."

It was in the fall of the year of the delivery of this speech that the health of Grattan began to fail rapidly. He retired for recuperation to the mountains of Wicklow. He caught a severe cold from the dews of the evening and on his return to Tinnehinch he was troubled with severe pains in his chest. In March, 1820, he was able to go up to Dublin for the election, but the state of his health precluded his participation on the hustings. As his illness increased he manifested a deep anxiety to return to London for the opening of parliament, as he had set his heart on making one more appeal in behalf of his proscribed countrymen. He coveted one more honor—that of presenting the Catholic petition and making the motion.

Realizing his condition he decided to make the journey by slow stages. But toward the latter part of April his disease had made such alarming progress that his physicians positively forbade his attempting the journey. Turning to the men of science he said, "We are both right; you in ordering me to stay, and I in deciding to go." He wrote to Sir Henry Parnell that he would reach London early in May, and to give notice that he would bring in the Catholic petition on the tenth. He grew weaker, but persisted in his determination. "I will bring in the petition," he said, "and then I will make my bow." By the first of the month, however, he was so much worse that he had to abandon the idea, and, at his request, Parnell announced a postponement of the motion until May twenty-fifth. On the twelfth of the month a deputation of Catholics waited upon him at his home, and he assured them he would present their petition. "My last breath," he said, "belongs to my country."

Further efforts to dissuade him were abandoned. As he prepared for the journey, his friends called to make their farewells. "I will fall at my post," he said to one of them. When he set out for London his condition was little short of desperate. The quay was swarming with people who surrounded his carriage and cheered. Although greatly agitated, he called for some wine and drank to the health of the people of Dublin. On arriving at Liverpool he was met at the quay by an enthusiastic crowd, which insisted on taking the horses from his carriage and drawing him to the hotel. By this time he was unable even to bear the jarring of carriages, and a boat, fitted up with mattresses and protected by canvas, was taken and he

proceeded by canal. When he reached London the physicians tried to dissuade him from going to the house, but in vain. The speaker proffered every aid and offered the use of his home. His strength failed him so rapidly after this, that he was compelled to surrender, and on June fourth, 1820, in the seventy-fourth year of his age, Henry Grattan passed from the service of Ireland. While it was his desire to be buried in his own country, on the ground bestowed upon him by the gratitude of his people, the universal demand of the empire was that he should rest among the statesmen of Westminster Abbey. And there he lies, side by side, with Charles James Fox—the man he loved, and by whom he was beloved.

"Here, near yon walls so often shook
By the stern might of his rebuke;
While bigotry, with blanching brow,
Heard him, and blushed, but would not bow.
Here, where his ashes may fulfil
His country's cherished mission still,
And when, by his example fired,
Some patriot, like himself, inspired,
Again the arduous theme shall try,
For which 'twas his to live and die;
Here let him point his last appeal,
Where statesmen and where kings shall kneel;
His bones will warn them to be just,
Still pleading, even from the dust."

IX

No study of Grattan would be complete without some reference to the more personal side of his character, which was gentle, lovable, generous and pure.

If the orator of the parliament houses of Dublin and London was inspiring and admirable, the gentleman of Tinnehinch was charming and entertaining, and when he was talking in his library or while meandering about the exquisite valley of his home, he was quite as eloquent and illuminating as when he addressed himself to senates or assemblies. Very soon after his marriage he sought a beautiful spot of comparative seclusion whither he might repair for the pleasures of domesticity and recuperation, and his thoughts instinctively turned to the charming vale which had so entranced him in boyhood when visiting his uncle at Celbridge. It appears that it was one of the dreams of his youth ultimately to have a home in the county of Wicklow, for we find him writing to a friend, "I have not forgotten the romantic valley—I look on it with an eye of forecast—it may be the recreation of an active life, or the retreat of an obscure one." The hills, the pastoral beauty of the valley, the waterfalls, the winding woodland paths, the little ruins of Tinnehinch made such an indelible impression upon his youth, that he sought a home amid its scenery, and that home, the solace of his sorrowing maturity, should have been his sepulcher. Not only is it associated with the sorrows of the despairing patriot—the spot where he meditated in agony of spirit upon the destruction of the parliament, the scene of the conferences in the interest of Catholic emancipation—but it had been purchased with the money bestowed upon him for the purpose by the gratitude of his country. Every moment that he could properly spare from public service was lovingly devoted to the improvement of the estate. The inn at Tinnehinch was converted into a residence.

We have amusing glimpses of Grattan battling with a mountain stream which baffled his efforts to restrain it and prevent its frequent inundation of the meadows. His assumption of the airs of a country gentleman appears to have been immensely diverting to his friends, and Sir Hercules Langrishe has handed down a pun about Grattan "contending with his overwhelming Flood." He became deeply attached to the place, so much so that when during the dismal days of '98 soldiers cut down some of the finest trees on the estate, his wife kept it from him lest the news might intensify his suffering. In his memorandum book is written his sorrow over the death of a favorite steward, and his regret that he could not be buried at Tinnehinch. He was never so happy as when surrounded at his home by the brilliant men he loved—Curran, Plunkett, Burrows, and lesser lights, with whom he wandered, boy-wise, through the woods, along the river, across the meadows. He was from his early youth an inveterate reader, and after he became a member of the imperial parliament, he found more time to minister to his taste for literature. When quite advanced in years he took up the study of French, and, for his own amusement, translated into that language some of the stories of Miss Edgeworth, for whose novels he had a partiality.

Throughout his life he was a lover of society, and after he entered the political activity of the empire, he found himself deluged with invitations to the most exclusive and brilliant houses in London. He was a frequent guest at Holland House, then in the heyday of its glory; at Spencer House, where Lady Spencer complained that the brilliancy of his conversation

caused the guests to linger late into the night; at Devonshire House and Buckingham House—both noted as the rendezvous of the intellectually elect, and the politically powerful. Even in England, however, he preferred the country to the garish glories of the metropolis, and frequently, after his labors in the house he would take a boat down the Thames and walk along its beloved banks beneath the shade of its great elms. Occasionally he would make excursions into the country to a place where he could hear the nightingales, for he loved music "like an Italian."

After his love of the country, and literature, he found his keenest delight in the theater. His son has given us a picture of a fascinating talk-fest at Tunbridge Wells between Samuel Rogers, the poet, Grattan and Cumberland, who resided there at the time, in which the sole topics were dramas and actors—their relative merits, their eccentricities, their styles of acting. He prided himself on a critical knowledge of all the great artists of his time, and could regale a company for an evening with criticisms of Garrick, Barry, Mrs. Fitzhenry, Kemble, Kean, Mrs. Siddons and Miss O'Neill. He was persuaded to accompany his son to see the latter, who came upon the scene rather late in his life, and he who had seen the master mummers of an earlier day went prepared to be disappointed with her impersonation of Ophelia. Before the evening was over the veteran was in tears. He later saw her in *Juliet* and became one of her most devoted followers.

His peculiar social charm appears to have been his simplicity, his boyishness, his utter lack of affectation, and while his conversation did not emit so many bril-

liant, dazzling sparks as that of Curran whose mimicry and drollery were irresistible, it possessed a constant glow. There was substance in all he said even at the dinner table. It is said that of all the brilliant men with whom he associated in his earlier life—and they were the ornaments of Ireland—none could approach him in the felicity with which he could, if given time, strike off a characterization of a man or a woman.

Grattan was extremely human, with human weaknesses, even to the writing of bad poetry. No man was ever more loyal in his friendships. He never broke with a friend until he felt that friend had broken with his country, and it was this conviction which led to the break with Flood. His love for Curran was tender; his love of Charlemont so intense that he permitted no political differences to come between them; his love of Fox so deep that he forgave his not unnatural timidity in failing to press Catholic emancipation as he felt should have been done; and he loved Plunkett as a father loves a son. Among the great Irish orators there lived none purer, truer, sweeter, nobler than Henry Grattan.

X

It is probable that the average critic would pronounce Grattan the greatest of the Irish orators. In a physical sense he did not possess the advantages of O'Connell, Plunkett or Meagher, but was handicapped to a degree almost equal to Curran. There was nothing commanding in his stature, which was medium, nor in his proportions, which were slight. If his form

was slender it was at least graceful, and there was a glow to his countenance more arresting than mere bulk. His voice, while lacking in richness, and not strong enough for tumultuous outdoor meetings, possessed a variety of tones which lent themselves to musical modulation; and while he spoke ordinarily with great rapidity his enunciation was so perfect that not a syllable was slurred, and he was understood perfectly in all parts of the house. In striving for effect he had a manner of raising his voice to the highest pitch and suddenly lowering it almost to a whisper. No man, according to his contemporaries, could put so much of scorn into the pronunciation of a single word. His delivery was not such as might have been expected from a close student of the stage. His gestures were explosive rather than graceful, wholly unstudied, and at first a trifle disconcerting. It was this phase of his art which sent a momentary chill through his English friends during the first few moments of his initial speech in the imperial house of commons. The impressiveness of his delivery consisted almost entirely in the intense earnestness and ardor with which he spoke.

He made no pretense to speaking without preparation. While it is probable that some of his finer passages, such as the peroration to his speech on the Declaration of Rights, were written out and memorized, it was his method merely to jot down the heads of his speech. His superiority, as an agitator, over all his predecessors, consisted in his genius in sprinkling his speeches with catch phrases which were eagerly seized upon by the multitude as shibboleths. One of the few complaints of his critics has been that he re-

lied too extensively upon the epigram. He appears to have fallen naturally into the use of this rhetorical weapon. He resorted to imagery, in common with all the Irish orators, but unlike many, he curbed his fancy, toned down his figures, and gave to his pictures a polish that places them above rebuke. No speaker ever felt more passionately than he, but in his most powerful denunciations he never permitted the intensity of his passion to push him to the extremes of expression. While not perhaps so close a reasoner as Flood, the argumentative features of his orations are the most impressive, never overburdened with ornament, or illustration. Feeling that he was speaking for posterity he fortified himself with all available knowledge on the subject he discussed. Thus his speeches on tithes are treatises, his speeches in behalf of Catholic emancipation are histories. In this regard he greatly resembled Edmund Burke, and like Burke, too, he interspersed his discourses with philosophical comments of a high order. Unlike some of his Irish contemporaries he was a master in the art of condensation. He possessed the knack of saying as much in a paragraph as some men are able to say in a speech. This was partly due to his genius in the selection of his topics as well as to his capacity for concise statement. It is worthy of comment that with Grattan concise statement does not imply jerky, prosy sentences. On the contrary he was able to impart a musical rhythm to his sentences suggestive of the Greeks. But after all is said regarding the mechanical features of his art, the fact remains that his vast superiority lies in the nobility and purity of spirit that shines through his speeches.

Critics are agreed that few modern orators have

surpassed him in the power of invective and bitter sarcasm. Whatever may be thought of the wisdom of his attack on Flood, there can be but one opinion as to the overpowering manner in which it was made. Its closing paragraph will give some idea of the nature of the whole:

"I will interrupt him, and say, Sir, you are much mistaken if you think that your talents have been as great as your life has been reprehensible; you began your parliamentary career with an acrimony and personality which could only have been justified by a supposition of virtue: after a rank and clamorous opposition you became on a sudden silent; you were silent for seven years; you were silent on the greatest questions, and you were silent for money. In 1773, while a negotiation was pending to sell your talents and your turbulence, you absconded from your duty in parliament, you forsook your law of Poyning's, you forsook the questions of economy and abandoned all the old themes of your former declamation; you were not at that period to be found in the house; you were seen, like a guilty spirit, haunting the lobby of the house of commons, watching the moment in which the question should be put, that you might vanish; you were descried, with a criminal anxiety, retiring from the scenes of your past glory; or you were perceived coasting the upper benches of this house, like a bird of prey, with an evil aspect and a sepulchral note, meditating to pounce on its quarry:—these ways, they were not the ways of honor, you practised pending a negotiation which was to end either in your sale or your sedition: the former taking place, you supported the rankest measures that ever came before parliament—the embargo of 1776, for instance. 'O fatal embargo, that breach of law and ruin of commerce.' You supported the unparalleled profusion and jobbing of Lord Harcourt's scandalous ministry—the address to support the American war, the other address to send four thousand men, which you had

yourself declared to be necessary for the defense of Ireland, to fight against the liberties of America, to which you had declared yourself a friend; you, Sir, who delight to utter execrations against the American commissioners of 1778, on account of their hostility to America; you, Sir, who manufacture stage thunder against Mr. Eden, for his anti-American principles; you, Sir, whom it pleases to chant a hymn to the immortal Hampden; you, Sir, approved of the tyranny exercised against America; and you, Sir, voted four thousand Irish troops to cut the throats of the Americans fighting for their freedom, fighting for your freedom, fighting for the great principle, liberty; but you found at last—and this should be an eternal lesson to men of your craft and cunning—that the king had only dishonored you; the court had bought, but would not trust you; and, having voted for the worst measures, you remained for seven years the creature of salary without the confidence of government. Mortified at the discovery, and stung by disappointment, you betake yourself to the sad expedients of duplicity; you try the sorry game of a trimmer in your progress to the acts of an incendiary; you give no honest support either to the government or to the people; you, at the most critical period of their existence, take no part, you sign no non-consumption agreement, you are no Volunteer, you oppose no Perpetual Mutiny bill, no altered Sugar bill; you declare that you lament that the Declaration of Rights should have been brought forward; and observing, with regard to prince and people, the most impartial treachery and desertion, you justify the suspicion of your sovereign by betraying the government as you had sold the people: until, at last, by this hollow conduct and for some other steps, the result of mortified ambition—being dismissed and another person put in your place—you fly to the ranks of the Volunteers and canvass for mutiny; you announce that the country was ruined by other men during that period in which she had been sold by you. Your logic is that the repeal of the Declaratory act is not the repeal of a law at all, and the effect of that logic is an

English act affecting to emancipate Ireland by exercising over her the legislative authority of the British parliament. Such has been your conduct, and at such conduct every order of your fellow subjects have a right to exclaim. The merchant may say to you—the constitutionalist may say to you—the American may say to you—and I, I now say to your beard, Sir—you are not an honest man."

One of Grattan's oratorical devices in which he surpassed was in the mingling of a tribute to some abused person with a denunciation, sarcastic or otherwise, of those making the attack. This can be illustrated in his defense of Doctor Kirwin:

"What is the case of Doctor Kirwin? That man preferred this country and our religion, and brought to both a genius superior to what he found in either; he called forth the latent virtues of the human heart, and taught men to discover in themselves a mine of charity, of which the proprietors had been unconscious; in feeding the lamp of charity he had almost exhausted the lamp of life; he comes to interrupt the repose of the pulpit, and shakes one world with the thunder of the other. The preacher's desk becomes the throne of light; around him a train, not such as crouch and swagger at the levees of princes —horse, foot and dragoon—but that wherewith a great genius peoples his own state; charity in action, and vice in humiliation; vanity, arrogance and pride appalled by the rebuke of the preacher, and cheated for a moment of their native improbity. What reward? Saint Nicholas within, or Saint Nicholas without. The curse of Swift is upon him to have been born an Irishman; to have possessed a genius, and to have used his talents for the good of his country. Had this man, instead of being the brightest of preachers, been the dullest of lawyers; had he added to dulness venality; had he aggravated the crime of venality, and sold his vote, he had been a judge: or, had he been born a blockhead, bred a slave and trained

up in a great English family, and handed over as a household circumstance to the Irish viceroy, he would have been an Irish bishop and an Irish peer, with a great patronage, perhaps a borough, and had returned members to vote against Ireland, and the Irish parochial clergy must have adored his stupidity and deified his dulness. But, under the present system, Ireland is not the element in which a native genius can rise, unless he sells that genius to the court and atones by the apostacy of his conduct for the crime of his nativity."

No better example of Grattan's power of brilliant denunciation can be found anywhere, perhaps, than in his speech on Napoleon in the British parliament in 1815, but the speech should be read in its entirety to be appreciated at its true value. I shall conclude the illustrations of Grattan's manner of mingling rebuke with tribute by quoting his beautiful reference to Lord Charlemont in connection with his dismissal from the ministry:

"We see the old general who led you to your constitution march off; dismissed by your ministry as unfit to be trusted with the government of a county; the cockade of government struck from his hat. That man whose accomplishments gave a grace to your cause, and whose patriotism gave a credit to your nobles; whom the rabble itself could not see without veneration, as if they beheld something not only good, but sacred. The man who, drooping and faint when you began your struggle, forgot his infirmity and found in the recovery of your constitution a vital principle added to his own. The man who, smit with the eternal love of fame and freedom, carried the people's standard until he planted it on the citadel of freedom—see him dismissed from his government for those very virtues, and by that very minister for whose continuance you are to thank the king. See him overwhelmed at once with the adoration of his country and the displeasure of her ministers. The history

of nations is ofttimes a farce. What is the history of that nation that having, at the hazard of everything dear to her free constitution, obtained its mistress, banishes the champion and commits the honor of the lady to the care of the ravisher? There was a time when the vault of liberty could hardly contain the flight of your pinion; some of you went forth like a giant rejoicing in his strength; and now you stand like elves, at the door of your own pandemonium. The armed youth of the country, like a thousand streams, thundered from a thousand hills, and filled the plain with the congregated waters in whose mirror was seen, for a moment, the watery image of the British constitution; the waters subside, the torrents cease, the rill ripples within its own bed, and the boys and children of the village paddle in the brook."

Few of the great orators have had a greater felicity of expression or could, in a sentence, throw out a suggestion of such great significance. Thus, in speaking of the patriots who made terms with the ministry, he said that "they became the tail of the court and ceased to be the head of the people." Again, when it was proposed to conciliate, he says, "be assured that England will never grant to your meanness what she refuses to your virtue." Replying to the suggestion that certain wrongs were righted by the lack of prosecution, he exclaimed that "robbery unpunished does not repeal the decalogue." Touching upon the adoption of a police law in Dublin which had been rejected in London, he shamed the parliament by saying that "the ministers looked for a plan, and they found it in the dirt, where the spirit and good sense of the city of London had cast it." Objecting to the expenditure of money for the building of an official mansion, he said: "I had much rather, if you were to go to a great expense for an edifice where you had not income for

your establishment, I had much rather see a hospital built to humanity, where age and infirmity should sit smiling at the gate, than this temple, built to penal laws, where the revenue officer presides with a quill in his wig and a penal clause in his pocket." Speaking of the purchase of parliamentary seats and the sale of legislators, he scornfully exclaims: "I see some who would make a merit of being publicly obnoxious, and would canvass for the favor of the British minister, by exhibiting the wounds of their reputation." Again, on the same subject, he says: "They (country gentlemen) must see and despise the pitiful policy of buying the country gentleman with an offer to wrap him up in the old castoff clothes of the aristocracy —a clumsy covering, and a thin disguise; never the subject of your respect, and frequently the subject of your derision." One of his most telling and pathetic sentences that made an impression was that "the path of public treachery in a principal country leads to the block, but in a nation governed like a province to the helm." Answering the sneer that many of the Catholics were uneducated, he asked: "Can we, who have enacted darkness, reproach the Catholics with a want of light?" Warning against the French revolutionary philosophy, he said: "Touch not the plant of Gallic growth; its fruit is death, though it is not the tree of knowledge." Arguing that the empire could not object to the Irish in foreign armies as long as Ireland is made an impossible place of residence, he aptly said: "We met our own laws at Fontenoy." Insisting that the government had no right to interfere with the religion of the subject, he exclaimed: "The naked Irishman has a right to approach his God without a

license from his king." Illustrations of Grattan's felicity of expression could be multiplied indefinitely.

No orator ever understood or appreciated more thoroughly the advantages of the right sort of exordium or peroration. His method in opening was to rush directly to the point at issue—to state it challengingly, defiantly, concisely in a sentence. His perorations are almost invariably eloquent, touching, deeply impressive. One more will be given.

"They advance—the Catholics—from the wilderness where for a hundred years they have wandered, and they come laden with their families and their goods, whether conducted by an invisible hand, or by a cloudy pillar, or a guardian fire, and they desire to be received into your hospitable constitution. Will the elders of the land come forth to greet them? Or will the British ministry send forth their hornet to sting them back into the desert? I mentioned that their claim was sustained by a power above; look up! Behold the balances of heaven! Pride in the scale against justice, and pride flies up and kicks the beam."

Among the great orators of Ireland Henry Grattan is fortunate in his relations to posterity. His speeches are inseparably connected with the most fascinating period of his country's history. His is the pæan and the lament. The student of the past will turn to Grattan to complete his understanding of the Declaration of Rights that marked Ireland's redemption, and of the union which marked her fall. Nor can the lover of religious liberty fail to find in his masterful pleas for Catholic emancipation much that is inspiring and illuminating. Fortunately for his fame in England and America his style, while not perfect, perhaps, has

met with the commendation of the critics. The student of British eloquence may pass by the speeches of Flood as stilted and antiquated, those of Plunkett as prosy, and those of Sheil as strained; if he be something of a dullard he may even ignore Curran because his figures were sometimes too startling; or O'Connell because he spoke the language of the people; or Phillips because he spoke the language of the clouds; but no one who would know the masterpieces of British eloquence can afford to ignore Henry Grattan any more than Chatham, Burke, Fox or Pitt.

III

JOHN PHILPOT CURRAN

The Rebellion of '98; the Anarchy of the Courts; the Story of Packed Juries and Informers; the Reign of Terror

THE infamies toward Ireland for which England must eventually answer to posterity have not been confined to the enactment of laws to destroy her commerce and industries or to debase and humiliate her people. They have not been confined to the treachery and corruption through which she struck down the parliament of Dublin, to the massacres of the innocents or the heartless evictions of women and children. The blackest, basest, most atrocious chapter will be reserved for her legalized assassinations of Irish patriots under the forms of law as related in shameful tales of the state trials of the latter days of the eighteenth and the early days of the nineteenth centuries.

It was incidental to the insurrection of '98 that England, through her constituted authorities, began to mob the law. The rights of citizens were ruthlessly brushed aside and trampled beneath the feet of venal judges whose ermine dripped the slime of corruption. Evidence was secured through torture, and the informer, the most repulsive excrescence of humanity, was made a pampered favorite of the state. The patriot was tried before judges who understood that

the government expected convictions and executions. The court rooms were packed, in numerous notable cases, with the soldiery whose rattling musketry was intended to intimidate the advocate who dared demand for his Irish client the protection of the law. The juries were deliberately packed with the prejudiced and the purchased; and in at least one instance where the jurors thus selected recoiled in horror from the crime expected of them, the constituted authorities did not hesitate to introduce liquor into their deliberations and death warrants were written with the trembling fingers of drunken men.

The heroes of '98, however, were not left entirely naked to their enemies. One man there was whom the gruesome scaffolds, the thousand graves, the glistening bayonets, the scowling court and the bloody ministry could not silence. Ireland found a voice for her unfortunate sons. It was the voice of genius—a voice so eloquent that its message has been carried down through the century and will instruct the world in the deep damnation of '98 as long as the language lives. It was the voice of that marvelous man, the most lovable, in many respects the most brilliant genius that Ireland has produced—the voice of John Philpot Curran.

I

In the year 1750 there were probably few villages in Ireland more obscure than the village of Newmarket in the county of Cork. Among the quaint characters of the community was James Curran, a descendant of one of Cromwell's soldiers who, in a minor position,

eked out a mere existence with a meager salary. He was the object of much amusement because of his love of disputation and his familiarity with the Greek and Roman classics. Among the villagers, however, he was looked upon as inferior in mentality to his wife, who was saturated with the poetic traditions of Erin and could relate the beautiful stories of the olden time, before the fairies tripped away, with an eloquence that fascinated her humble audiences. It is not remarkable that even in this obscure village of the county of Cork the child of parents so unusual should develop qualities beyond the ordinary, and soon the village gossips transferred their attention from the parents to the child who was born on July twenty-fourth and called John Philpot Curran.

There were no Froissarts lingering then in Newmarket to chronicle the career of the ragged genius and little is known of his childhood beyond the fact that he possessed his mother's wit and fancy and an irreverential and mischievous disposition. Unkempt, dirty no doubt, but effervescent with the joy of living, he played marbles and frequented the fairs where he delighted in the interchange of repartee, and still more in the fights that followed the frolics. One day while playing in the street an old gentleman stood by enjoying the originality of the boy's observations, his wit and waggery. He invited the boy to his home, taught him the classics, and persuaded his parents to give him a thorough education. He progressed with remarkable rapidity in his studies and in his nineteenth year he matriculated at old Trinity.

Curran's career at college inspired him with that ardent love of the classics that never grew cold and

developed the social qualities which endeared him in later years to the brilliant circles that surrounded him. Here we get our first glimpse of Curran the mimic, the wit, the royal spendthrift, the brilliant raconteur, and see him rattling his few remaining shillings like a lord as he plunged into the rollicking life of the town with wild abandon.

On leaving Trinity he renounced his original ambition for an ecclesiastical career and went to London where he enrolled as a student of law in the society of the Middle Temple. This period marked the fascinating development of that rare genius which was destined to link his name with that of the choice spirits of the age. The bustle and brilliancy of London thrilled while it froze him. For the first time in his life he faced the world, and the sorrows of humanity were impressed upon his sensibilities—sorrows with which he was to become so familiar and to use so effectively in reaching the hearts of men. He wrote to a friend that "the thousand gilded chariots" would make one think that "the world assembled to play the fool in London unless you believe the report of the passing bells and hearses." On learning with horror that in the room adjoining his a man had been dead and utterly neglected for two days he whimsically wrote that he played a dirge on a Jew's-harp, and would continue the funereal tribute while "he continues to be my neighbor." Who shall say that little incidents like these did not enter into the weaving of the splendid woof of Curran's genius—a genius which saw laughter through tears.

The throbbing life of the metropolis kindled his ambition and he devoted himself with assiduity to his

studies. He was much too poor and obscure to touch even the outer fringe of the high society that was later to do him homage. But while meandering about the coffee houses he once caught sight of Goldsmith—a kindred genius—and once he gazed with awe upon Mansfield on the bench. Several times his improvidence led him to the theater where he was captivated by the art of Garrick. It was this very improvidence which paved the way for his one meeting with a celebrity while in London. His money gone, his remittance delayed, and unable to dine, he sauntered forth gaily enough into Saint James' Park, where he sat down on a bench and whistled a melancholy Irish air, a reminder of his native village. The old tune attracted the attention of an old man at the other end of the bench.

"Pray, sir, may I venture to ask where you learned that tune?" inquired the stranger.

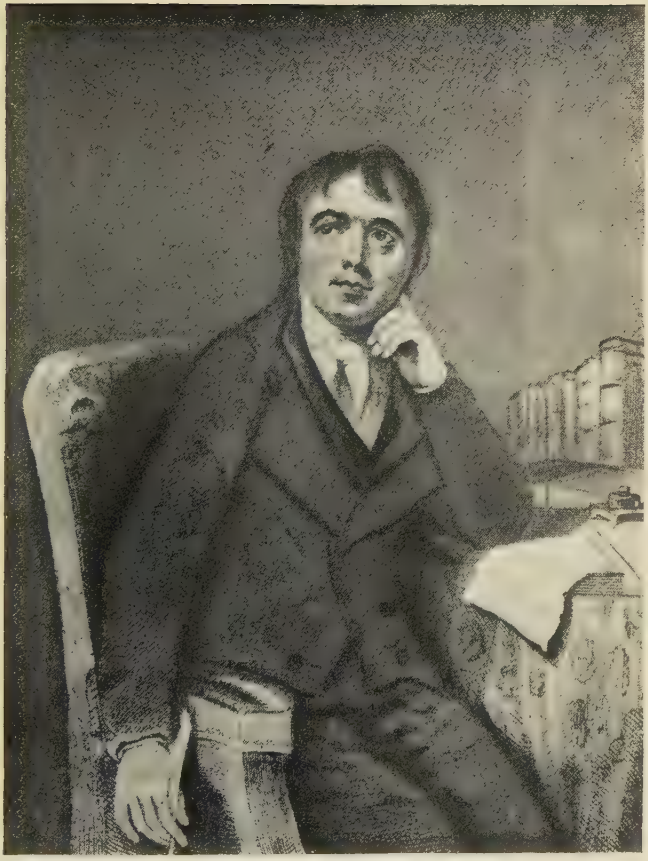
"Indeed, sir, indeed you may, sir," replied Curran; "I learned it in my native country, in Ireland."

"But how comes it, sir, at this hour when other people are dining, you remain here whistling old Irish airs?"

"Alas, sir, I, too, have been in the habit of dining," Curran replied, "but, to-day, my money gone, my credit not yet arrived, I am even forced to come and dine upon a whistle in the park."

The old man was Macklin, the Irish actor, and that day Curran dined as the guest of the actor. A few years later when they met again it was at a fashionable dinner in Dublin where Macklin was the guest of honor and Curran was invited to impart brilliance to the banquet.

It was at this period that he began, in part unconsciously, to aid in the development of his genius. His reading at this time was significant. The melancholy beauty of Thompson's *Seasons* made a passionate appeal to him, and he read Sterne, that master of the artistry of word weaving, while Junius and *Paradise Lost* were studied and read aloud for oratorical style. The unconscious part of his training came in his attendance on wakes and weddings where he received his lesson in pathos and mirth, and in his familiar intercourse with the peasantry. On his vacations at Newmarket, he fathomed and learned to know the Irish heart. The most impressive phase of his London development, however, was in the stubborn molding of his oratorical art. He was naturally eloquent, but not an orator by nature. Because of a confusion in his speech, which had led his comrades to dub him "Stuttering Jack," he set to work doggedly to remedy the defect, but it was long before he overcame the difficulty. While he was a persistent attendant at debating societies, his timidity and self-depreciation restrained him from participating in the discussions until his resentment of the pseudonym of "Orator Mum," and his over-indulgence, while dining, in a glass of punch, drove him into a debate in which he distinguished himself. He read aloud by the hour to improve his enunciation, imitated the tones of various orators he had heard and read the orations. Realizing that his presence was not impressive—for he was short, slight and ill-proportioned—he practised recitations before the mirror, studying gesticulation. He studied oratory as an art, and it was an artist, as well as a lawyer, that traveled back to Ireland in 1775 and became a mem-



John Philpot Curran
From a rare engraving

ber of the bar of which he was so soon to become the brightest ornament of a century, and the sole rival of Erskine, among all the forensic gladiators of Great Britain.

II

It was inevitable that one of such unusual eloquence should drift into parliament, and soon Curran became a member of the scintillating house of commons of that time where he came into intimate association with Flood, Grattan, Burgh and Yelverton, and was soon catalogued with them in capacity. While his parliamentary career was brilliant he necessarily played a secondary part to Flood and Grattan, and his speeches while masterful and inspiring, lose in public interest beside the more memorable orations delivered in the courts. His first participation in debate was in support of Flood's measure of parliamentary reform on the historic evening when the venerable orator, dressed in the uniform of the Volunteers, and supported by members of that organization in the gallery, shocked the more conservative of the statesmen, and Curran's fire and force created a lively enthusiasm among the auditors. Within a few weeks he was engaged in an acrimonious exchange of compliments with Lord Clare, the renegade, which ended on the dueling field.*

* The duel between Curran and Clare grew out of a debate to which Lord Clare had invited the beautiful Duchess of Rutland and the other ladies of the Castle circle to hear him "put down Curran." The latter having heard of the boast and noticing the presence of the Duchess in the gallery took advantage of a doze into which Clare had fallen to force the fighting. "I hope," he said, "I may say a few words on this great subject without disturbing the sleep of any right honorable gentleman, and yet,

Within a year he was attacking the pension list with a sarcasm and satire quite as effective as Grattan's inspired eloquence, and henceforth he acted consistently with the little band of patriots who battled desperately against the corruption of the Castle and the plan of union. A Protestant himself, he joined Grattan in pleading for Catholic emancipation, and upon the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam he solemnly warned the government that its policies were tending toward insurrection, for he foresaw the spirit of '98. As late as 1796 he gave ardent support to Ponsonby's plan for parliamentary reform which provided for the granting of civil rights to the Catholics. The boldness of his attacks upon the corruption of the Castle may be illustrated from the following extract from one of his most notable parliamentary speeches:

"I rise," he said, "with the deep concern and melancholy hesitation which a man must feel who does not know whether he is addressing an independent parliament, the representatives of the people of Ireland, or whether he is addressing the representatives of corruption. I rise to make the experiment; and I approach the question with all those awful feelings of a man who finds a dear friend prostrate and wounded on the ground, and who dreads lest the means he may use to recover him may only show that he is dead and gone forever. I rise to make an experiment on the representatives of the people, whether they have abdicated their trust, and have become the paltry representatives of Castle influence. . . . I rise

perhaps, I ought rather to envy than blame the tranquillity of the right honorable gentleman. I do not feel myself so happily tempered as to be lulled to repose by the storms that shake the land. If they invite rest to any, that rest ought not to be lavished on the guilty spirit." In the duel that resulted Curran had the first shot without effect, and Clare took aim for nearly half a minute and missed.

in an assembly of three hundred persons, one hundred of whom have places or pensions; I rise in an assembly, one-third of whom have their ears set against the complaints of the people and their eyes intently turned to their own interests; I rise before the whisperers of the treasury, the bargainers, the runners of the Castle; I address an audience before whom was held forth the doctrine that the crown ought to use its influence on this house.

"I should not be surprised if bad men of great talents should endeavor to enslave a people; but when I see folly uniting with vice, corruption with imbecility, men without talent attempting to overthrow our liberty, my indignation rises at the presumption and audacity of the attempt. That such men should creep into power is a fatal symptom of the constitution; the political, like the material body, when it nears its dissolution, often bursts out in swarms of vermin.

"In this administration a place can be found for every bad man, whether it be to distribute the wealth of the treasury, to vote in the house, to whisper and to bargain, to stand at the door and note the entrance and exits of members, to mark whether they earn their wages—whether it be for the hireling who comes for his hire, or for the drunken aide-de-camp who staggers in a brothel; nay, some of them find their way to the treasury bench, the political musicians, or hurdy-gurdy men, to pipe the praises of the viceroy."

Such denunciations, however, could not penetrate the hide of the hirelings of the Castle who sat in the house prepared to sell the liberties of their country. At length, discouraged, disgusted, foreseeing the shameful end, Curran retired from parliament and was spared the humiliation of being a member of the assembly at the time of its wholesale purchase by the mercenaries of William Pitt. He also, no doubt, had his personal reasons for severing his connection with

public life. He was too discriminating a critic not to know that his parliamentary speeches were far inferior to those at the bar, and he probably had enough of the pride of authorship to wish to appear before the public at his best. It has been suggested that in common with the great majority of forensic orators he was not adapted to the parliamentary method of discussion. In view of the fragments of his speeches in the house of commons this can scarcely be said of Curran. There are passages of his speeches on the pension list and the Catholic question that bear the unmistakable imprint of genius.

In later years, in conversation with Charles Phillips, he gave his own explanation, which seems the probable true one. "I was a person," he said, "attached to a great political party, whose leaders were men of importance in the state, totally devoted to those political pursuits from which my mind was necessarily distracted by studies of a different description. They allotted me my station in debate, which being generally in the rear, was seldom brought into action until near the close of the engagement. After having toiled through the Four Courts for the entire day, I brought to the house of commons a person enfeebled and a mind exhausted. I was compelled to speak late at night and had to rise early for the judges in the morning and my efforts were consequently crude; and where others had the whole day for the correction of a speech, I was left at the mercy of inability or inattention."

Notwithstanding this self-depreciation of the orator, it is probable that had he never delivered his marvelous masterpieces in the courts to overshadow the memory of his parliamentary efforts these alone would have

been sufficient to have preserved his fame among the bright particular stars of Irish eloquence.

III

Occasionally an advocate appears in a cause of such transcendent importance to the public that his name and genius are linked with the cause. It was the good fortune of Curran to be the champion of the succession of patriots whose causes were the causes of the nation, and to stand forth in a period of persecutions and oppression as the trusted champion of—a People. At a time when the liberty of Ireland was expiring, with freedom of discussion prohibited, the liberty of the press denied, and the writ of habeas corpus suspended, while the miserable creatures of the Castle were inaugurating a reign of terror through the conversion of the courts into bloody shambles, it was the privilege of Curran to stand defiantly in the very presence of power and to expose the perfidy of the conspiracy against the land of his nativity. The rôle he essayed called for more genius than that of O'Connell on the hustings, and for more intrepidity than that of Fitzgerald, and more probity than either. Pleading his causes in the days of intimidating judges and packed juries, he frequently failed to save his client from the vengeance of the hideous pack that hounded him, but through his genius and inspired eloquence he has pilloried, for all time, the enemies of the liberties of his people.

Curran had reached his forty-fourth year and was in the full bloom of his superb genius when there began the series of state trials which placed him to the

fore as the very voice and soul of Ireland. It was at this time that Archibald Rowan, secretary of the United Irishmen of Dublin, published an address to the Volunteers of Ireland, boldly dwelling upon the dangers confronting the public security both from within and without and calling upon them to resume their arms for the preservation of the public tranquillity. This was dynamite to the Castle. He was promptly arrested on the charge of seditious libel, and it was in his defense that Curran delivered the splendid oration considered to be his masterpiece.

This speech, and the incidents surrounding its delivery, made a profound impression on the country. In the popular imagination the cause took on a national character. It was not a battle between an individual and the Castle—it was a battle between Ireland and the English ministry. That the dignitaries of the state so considered it was evident in the significant presence of soldiery in the court room—placed there to awe the jury and intimidate the advocate. The court room was thronged with people and the surrounding streets were crowded. Ridiculing the idea of sedition and proclaiming Rowan's description of conditions as his own, Curran defied the government to the delight of the people, and paid tribute to the Volunteers in a passage of brilliant beauty:

"You can not but remember," he said, "that at a time when we had scarcely a soldier for our defense, when the old and the young were alarmed and terrified with apprehensions of a descent upon our coasts, that Providence seemed to have worked a miracle in our favor. You saw a band of armed men come forth at the great call of nature, of honor and their country. You saw

men of the greatest wealth and rank—you saw every class of the community give up its members, and send them armed into the field to protect the public and private tranquillity of Ireland. It is impossible for any man to turn back to that period without reviving those sentiments of tenderness and gratitude which then beat in the public bosom; to recollect amidst what applause, what tears, what prayers, what benedictions, they walked forth amongst spectators, agitated by the mingled sensations of terror and of reliance, of danger and of protection, imploring the blessings of heaven upon their heads, and its conquests upon their swords. That illustrious, that adored and abused body of men stood forward and assumed the title, which I trust the gratitude of their country will never blot from its history—'The Volunteers of Ireland.'"

In language of classic purity he appealed to the national pride by making invidious comparisons between the apparent rights of the Irish and the conceded rights of the people across the channel, reaching a climax in an audacious invocation of the spirit of the British law:

"I speak in the spirit of the British law which makes liberty commensurate with and inseparable from the British soil; which proclaims even to the stranger and the sojourner, the moment he sets foot on British earth, that the ground on which he treads is holy and consecrated by the genius of universal emancipation. No matter in what language his doom may have been pronounced; no matter what complexion incompatible with freedom an Indian or an African sun may have burned upon him; no matter in what disastrous battle his liberty may have been cloven down; no matter with what solemnities he may have been immolated upon the altar of slavery—the moment he touches the sacred soil of Britain, the altar and the god sink together in the dust; his soul walks abroad in its own majesty; his body swells beyond the

measure of his chains, that burst from around him, and he stands redeemed, regenerated and disenthralled by the irresistible genius of universal emancipation."

This lyric burst of eloquence, delivered with the glow of one inspired, so thrilled the spectators that, in the very presence of the frowning authorities and the startled soldiery, they broke into applause, and it was some time before sufficient order could be restored to permit the orator to proceed. Gathering force now and assuming greater audacity, Curran no longer defended his client; he lectured the Castle, or, better still, he took Ireland for his client and in defending her claim to human rights he entered upon a defense of the liberty of the press that was never surpassed by Erskine or Mackintosh. And when, in a final burst of supreme eloquence, he concluded, the hostility of court and armed men was again forgotten and the court room rang with the cheers of the people. As he left the room the throng outside, beside itself with enthusiasm, disregarded the importunities of the little genius to desist and literally picked him up and carried him to his home in triumph.

This speech, which deeply moved the people, failed to acquit his client; but a few weeks later, when Doctor William Brennan was prosecuted on a similar charge and Curran again defended, the prosecution failed.

The marvelous effect of Curran's defense of Rowan was not lost upon the Castle, and every effort was made through his more timid friends to persuade him to desert the cause of his country and ally himself with the sycophants of the ministry, but the tempter was turned aside with contempt.

In the spring of the following year Curran was called upon to defend William Jackson on a charge of treason. This unfortunate gentleman had become infatuated with the revolutionary idea in France and returned to Ireland with a view to determining the feasibility of an armed invasion by the French. Unsuspecting and unworldly, he fell in with an informer, and was betrayed to the authorities. The establishment of his guilt rested solely upon the evidence of a single person and, while two witnesses were necessary to convict in England in cases of this character, the pliant Irish courts ruled that in Ireland one would do. This was vital in that it prepared the way for the loose methods through which the government was able to rid itself of suspects later on, and Curran made a vigorous assault upon the one rule in England and another in Ireland. The establishment of this rule laid down the bars to the "informer," that monster of perversity who was to become the ablest coadjutor of the Castle in the series of state trials that were to follow. The conviction of Jackson followed the adoption of the rule, but Curran, through his fight, has given to history the shameful story of the assassin methods of the courts that tried and murdered, under the forms of law, so many of the patriots of Ireland.

Late in the year 1797 Curran's services as patriot-advocate were enlisted in behalf of Peter Finnerty, editor of *The Post,* who was charged with libeling the government in the person of the viceroy. The alleged libel was in reality but a plain statement of the truth relative to the trial and infamous execution of William Orr. This unfortunate man had been tried on the charge of high treason, had been defended by

Curran, found guilty and executed. This trial and execution probably has no parallel in perfidy in Irish history. Orr's life, previous to his arrest, had commanded the profound respect and affection of all who knew him. He was convicted, as usual, on the uncorroborated word of a wretched informer. The jury had deliberated throughout the night when the authorities, fearing a failure of their methods of intimidation, introduced liquor into the jury room and the death verdict was coaxed from drunken men. Upon regaining the use of their faculties and learning what they had done the miserable jurors recommended mercy, manfully setting forth in their petition the shameful facts. It was to no avail. The verdict of the inebriates, based upon the unsupported word of a purchased informer, was carried out and the name of William Orr lengthened the list of the Irish martyrs. He died protesting his innocence. These facts were set forth by Finnerty through the columns of his paper in a severe remonstrance to the viceroy of Ireland—and this was called "libel" by the government. Finnerty was accordingly summoned to trial.

Although Curran entered the court room at the beginning of the Finnerty trial with no idea of participating and without preparation, his speech in defense of the editor was spirited and brilliantly audacious. Realizing that the jury had been picked by the prosecution, he boldly proclaimed his knowledge to the jury in the very beginning. "You know and we know," he said, "upon what occasion you are come, and by whom you have been chosen; you are come to try an accusation professedly brought forward by the state, chosen by a sheriff who is appointed by our

accuser." Without giving the prosecution an opportunity to recover from the effect of the startling but true accusation, he plunged impetuously into a defense of the article deemed libelous and pronounced it true in all its parts. In defending the liberty of the press he did not hesitate to charge that the oppressors of Ireland were bent upon the suppression of a free press in Ireland with "the only printer in Ireland who dares to speak for the people in the dock." Thus challenging the right of the jury so selected to act, making the so-called libel of his client his own and personally vouching for its truth, he turned indignantly upon the jurors with the scornful challenge:

"Upright and honest jurors, find a civil and obliging verdict against the printer. And when you have done so march through the ranks of your fellow citizens to your own homes, and bear their looks as you pass along; retire to the bosoms of your families and your children, and when you are presiding over the morality of the parental board, tell those infants who are to be the future men of Ireland the history of this day. Form their young minds by your precepts, and confirm those precepts by your example; teach them how discreetly allegiance may be perjured on the table, or loyalty be forsworn in the jury box; and when you have done so, tell them the story of Orr; tell them of his captivity, of his children, of his crime, of his hopes and disappointments, of his courage and of his death; and when you find your little hearers hanging upon your lips, when you see their young eyes overflow with sympathy and sorrow and their young hearts bursting with the pangs of anticipated orphanage, tell them that you had the boldness and the justice to stigmatize the monster who had dared to publish the transaction."

Declaring that the government proposed that an

Irish jury should say to the world in their verdict that the government of Ireland was wise and merciful and the people prosperous and happy, he indignantly demanded:

"Merciful God, what is the state of Ireland, and where will you find the wretched inhabitant of this land? You will find him perhaps in gaol, the only place of security, I had almost said of ordinary habitation; you may see him flying by the conflagration of his dwelling; or you may find his bones bleaching on the green fields of the country; or he may be found tossing upon the surface of the ocean, and mingling his groans with those tempests, less savage than his persecutors, that drift him to a returnless distance from his family and his home. And yet, with these facts ringing in the ears and staring in the faces of the prosecutors, you are called upon to say on your oaths that these facts do not exist. You are called upon in defiance of shame, of truth, of honor, to deny the suffering under which you groan, and to flatter the persecution that tramples you under foot."

Thus, in the Finnerty case, Curran lost sight of his client in his country; or rather, he plead for his country through his client. Thus through the exaltation of his genius he raised the private issue to a public cause, and made the cowardly attempt of the oppressor to suppress an humble exposé of the wretched misgovernment of Ireland a peg on which to hang an excoriation of such brilliancy as to attract the attention of the world and hold it for a century. The verdict was against Finnerty, as was prearranged, but the viceroy would gladly have exchanged an unfavorable verdict for the suppression of Curran's tremendous indictment.

This takes us up to the fateful year of '98, the most

eventful in the career of Curran, and perhaps the most tragic in the history of Ireland. In January of that year the notorious state trials commenced in the attempt to convict Patrick Finney and fifteen others on a charge of treason and upon the uncorroborated evidence of a moral monster named James O'Brien. Confronted, as usual, with a hostile jury, Curran realized that the lives of his clients depended upon the demolishment of the testimony of the informer. His cross-examination of O'Brien was a classic. Assuming an attitude of respect and admiration, he threw the witness off his guard, won his confidence and step by step persuaded him through his admissions and boasting to expose his hidden baseness to the jury. It was upon the ineffable moral turpitude of the prosecuting witness that the advocate based his defense. His denunciation of this informer was the most ferocious, perhaps, that ever fell from his lips:

"Have you any doubt," he asked, "that it is the object of O'Brien to take down the prisoner for the reward that follows? Have you not seen with what more than instinctive keenness this bloodhound has pursued his victim? How he has kept him in view from place to place until he hunts him through the avenues of the court, to where the unhappy man stands now, hopeless of all succor save that which your verdict shall afford? I have heard of assassination by sword, by pistol and by dagger, but here is a wretch who would dip the evangelists in blood. If he thinks he has not sworn his victim to death, he is ready to swear without mercy and without end; but oh, do not, I conjure you, suffer him to take an oath; the arm of the murderer should not pollute the purity of the gospel; and if he will swear, let it be on the knife, the proper symbol of his profession."

Tradition has it that the effect of Curran's philippic upon spectators, the court and its miserable object was tremendous. As he analyzed the evidence, revealing the perjury in every line, he returned time and again to the assault until O'Brien, cowering in his seat, was in deadly fear of his life. Even the packed jury did not have the temerity to authorize a murder on the evidence of an informer who was as stupid as he was infamous, and Finney was promptly acquitted. The informer became the object of general detestation, and when a little later he was convicted of murder his execution was accompanied by horrible shouts and jeers of exultation.

After the rising of '98, in which as many as fifty thousand people lost their lives, the fury and fear of the alien rulers led to a veritable reign of terror in the courts, and into the maelstrom of passion Curran was instantly plunged. The leaders of the rising who survived were foredoomed to execution through packed juries and purchased testimony. It was with a clear comprehension of the futility of his efforts that Curran stepped forward to bear the brunt of the battle in defense of the patriots. The intimidation of Castle and court, the manufacture of evidence, the recognition of the informer, the packing of juries—all this was known to him. With Grattan and Plunkett hostile to the revolutionists and with O'Connell still a student and in the Kerry hills, John Philpot Curran became the man of the hour.

The first victims to be summoned to their certain death were Henry and John Sheares, both highly respected members of the Dublin bar. The scene in the court room was dramatic, for the defendants battling

for their lives were not ordinary culprits but gentlemen of social and professional brilliance. All classes were represented among the fascinated spectators. The examination of witnesses had proceeded throughout the day, the evidence against the accused accumulating hour by hour, until the shades of evening came and the flickering candlelight cast its grotesque shadows on the drawn tense faces of the people. The participants in this dramatic scene had not been permitted one moment's relaxation. It was midnight when Curran, weary from the protracted struggle, rose to make his closing plea for the two defendants. There was a movement of expectation in the gallery where the children of poverty, some of whom had figured secretly in the insurrection, leaned forward to hear.

"My lords," Curran began, "before I address you or the jury I would wish to make one preliminary observation. It may be an observation only—it may be a request. For myself, I am indifferent; but I feel I am now unequal to the duty—I am sinking under the weight of it. We all know the character of the jury: the interval of their separation must be short, if it should be deemed necessary to separate them. I protest I have sunk under this trial. If I must go on, the court must bear with me; the jury may also bear with me; and I will go on until I sink; but sitting for sixteen hours, with only twenty minutes interval in these times, I should hope it would not be thought an obtrusive request to ask for a few hours interval for repose."

The orator paused and waited—but not for long. The Castle was hungry for its prey. The gallows were ready—why wait? The attorney-general refused to agree on the ground that a great concession had

already been shown the defense. Pulling himself together, fired by the unfairness of the remark, Curran began with a melancholy smile:

"Gentlemen of the jury, it seems that much has been conceded to us. God help us. I do not know what has been conceded to me—if so insignificant a person may have extorted that remark. Perhaps it is a concession that I am allowed to rise in such a state of mind and body, of collapse and deprivation, as to feel but a little spark of indignation raised by the remark that much has been conceded to the counsel for the defense. Almighty and merciful God, who lookest down upon us, what are the times to which we are reserved, when we are told that much has been conceded to prisoners who are put upon their trial at a moment like this—that public convenience can not spare a respite of a few hours to those who are accused for their lives; and that much has been conceded to the poor advocate almost exhausted in the poor remark which he has endeavored to make upon it."

Summoning all the latent powers within him, he then launched forth into one of the most moving and eloquent of his speeches at the bar, albeit the evidence was all against him. He could only appeal to the heart of a jury that had been selected with the sanction of the prosecution, but he appealed to them with all the fervor of his nature, and plead with them not to encourage the appetite for blood already manifest in the hounds of the viceroy: and he could denounce the inevitable informer—this time because of his infidelity and his consequent disregard for an oath. At times he seemed upon the verge of a collapse. His voice sank almost to a whisper. His step faltered. Then once more his spirit spurred to mighty action the splendid genius, and the crowd in the court room

was momentarily swayed by an eloquence that was scarcely less than superhuman. But all in vain. The jury retired in the morning, found the brothers guilty, and both were condemned.

Five days went by and Curran was again in court defending John McCann against the evidence of the wretched informer, Thomas Reynolds, to whom the orator has given an immortality of infamy. The brilliancy and startling audacity of Curran's excoriation of Reynolds, who appears to have been a special favorite of the Castle, inspired the government to order the suppression of the orator's speech. McCann was convicted. Three days later Curran was again in court pleading for the life of William Byrne. The slimy Reynolds again figured as the prosecuting witness, and again the government prevented the publication of Curran's speech. But when, three days afterward, Curran appeared in defense of Oliver Bond, the Castle found that suppression had intensified the interest of the public in Curran's speeches. It was the evident intention at this time to frighten the advocate into a less obnoxious course of argument. Time and again in the course of his speech he was interrupted by men stationed in the court room for the purpose. Not content with this outrage, the hirelings of the Castle resorted to its armed men, who stood about in threatening attitude, staring at the speaker. Finally there was a rattling of musketry and an ominous movement of the soldiers in protest against some phase of the speech. Without a moment's hesitation Curran paused, and walking directly upon the uniformed ruffians, he looked them squarely and sternly in the eye, shook his clenched fist in their faces, and electrified

every decent man in the room with the thrilling exclamation: "You may assassinate, you shall not intimidate me." Just what the expression was that thus aroused the protest of the uniformed scullions of the Castle the record does not show; but in view of the honors reserved for Reynolds by the English government, it may have been the following, indicative of the manner in which Curran threw himself into the defense of the men of '98:

"Are you prepared," he asked, "in a case of life and death, of honor and of infamy, to credit a vile informer, the perjurer of a hundred oaths—a wretch whom honor, pride or religion could not bind? The forsaken prostitute of every vice calls upon you with one breath to blast the memory of the dead and to blight the character of the living. Do you think Reynolds to be a villain? It is true he dresses like a gentleman; and the confident expression of his countenance and the dry tones of his voice savor strong of growing authority. He measures his value by the coffins of his victims; and, in the field of evidence, appreciates his fame as the Indian warrior does his fight—by the number of scalps with which he can swell his triumphs. He has promised and betrayed —he has sworn and forsworn; and whether his soul goes to heaven or to hell he seems altogether indifferent, as he tells you that he has established an interest in both."

In common with all the other victims of the terrorism of '98, Bond was convicted, but died of apoplexy before the hangman could do his work.

Thus was the time of Curran passed during the whole of that melancholy year. Among all the great lawyers of the Dublin bar he stood out, distinct and alone, looming above the rest like a mountain among the foothills, the beloved and admired patriot pleader

of the heroes. During these trials his life was in constant danger. A government that would countenance a Reynolds would not be above the employment of an assassin; and the Bonds and McCanns were of but little consequence to the Castle compared to the colossal genius whose eloquence constitutes the most damning indictment of the time. Almost daily threatened with violence by anonymous letters handed him on his way to court, his footsteps dogged by hired ruffians, his reputation assailed by the character assassins of the Castle, he persevered in his patriotic course until the government seriously considered proceedings against him in the courts—which was another way of planning his assassination. Fortunately, however, the marvelous eloquence and commanding genius of Curran lifted his renown far beyond the little green isle, and his persecution would have reacted fatally upon the Castle, and the plan was abandoned. The effect of these trials upon Curran, however, was extremely depressing. The fortunes of his country were at so low an ebb that he contemplated leaving it forever. His health had suffered with his spirits and he was mentally exhausted. Broken, disheartened and ineffably sad, he went over to England for rest. With the consummation of the union, a little later, he abandoned all hope for his native isle and never ceased to regret the passing of the Volunteers, whose services he always thought might have prevented the destruction of the parliament. But the memories of Erin, both grave and gay, beckoned him back home; and well it was, for his genius had yet other work to do in Ireland.

It is significant of Curran's claim upon the lasting

gratitude and affection of his race that his brilliant advocacy should have been exerted in behalf of the children of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, against the property of whom the government had the temerity to move after the death of their heroic father, and that Curran persisted until the end in a desperate effort to save Wolfe Tone. Illegally court-martialed and sentenced to die the most ignominious of deaths, with the government unrelenting in its demand for blood, and the people stunned into apathy by the apparent hopelessness of the situation, it was Curran who fought and fought almost alone until the end. His one hope was that he might prevail upon the Court of King's Bench to assert its jurisdiction and delay thereby the execution of the sentence; that in the meanwhile France might threaten reprisals in the event of Tone's death; and that the case might be lifted from the sordid criminal status it held to one of political significance. The day dawned for the execution. Early in the morning Curran appeared in the court room leading the aged father of the condemned. Lord Kilwarden, one of the purest of Irish jurists upon the bench, promptly issued a habeas corpus order on the motion of the advocate, who laid stress upon the fact that the uniform of a French officer, which Tone wore, together with the fact that he held no commission from his majesty, protected him from death upon the scaffold. The utter contempt of the orders of the court on the part of the military authorities aroused the ire of Kilwarden, who for the second time ordered the sheriff to take the body of Tone into custody and to show the order of the court to General Craig. The official hurried to

the performance of his duty while the justice, the father and Curran anxiously awaited his return. At length the sheriff reported that he had again been positively refused admittance to the barracks, but had been informed that the prisoner had wounded himself with a knife. This closes the story. Tone lingered several days and died in prison.

After the destruction of the legislative independence of his country Curran made no concealment of his chagrin, but he declined to enter into any organized effort to bring about the repeal of the union. The period of the state trials was for the most part over, but the services of a patriot-advocate to plead the cause of Ireland in the courts was none the less needed. The next three years found him engaged in two celebrated suits in which he was enabled to plead the cause of Ireland through that of his clients.

The first of these, in 1802, was the civil suit of John Hervey against Charles Henry Sirr, the town marshal of Dublin, for false imprisonment. Curran's masterful argument in behalf of the plaintiff, exposing the tyranny of English misrule in Ireland, was addressed directly to the English people, and not without effect. The case of Hervey was a peculiarly aggravated one. He had been persistently persecuted by some of the petty officials who were pandering to the Castle and this systematic persecution, extending over a long period, had culminated in his incarceration without even the semblance of a legitimate excuse. The jury entered into the spirit of the advocate and brought in a verdict which, while small, was sufficient to serve the purpose Curran had in view. The startling revelations of the case made a profound impression across

the channel. Even the *Edinburg Review,* in a critical study of Curran's speeches in 1808, declared that "the facts stated in this (Curran's) speech are such as can not be perused without the utmost horror and the most lively indignation; and are calculated indeed to give such an impression of the outrageous abuses that were then familiar in that unhappy country that we should hesitate about the propriety of giving any further notoriety to the accusation if we had not seen, from the abstract of the record subjoined to the speech, that it received the sanction of the jury who, in spite of the high place and the terrible influence of the defendant, yet found a verdict of damages for the plaintiff."

A little later, in the celebrated cause of the King vs. Justice Johnson, Curran had another opportunity to drive home to the English people the injustices habitually practised by their representatives upon the Irish race. Incidental to the insurrection of 1803, Justice Johnson wrote a letter condemnatory of the Irish government, which was published in England and the amazing attempt was made, through a forced interpretation of the new act of parliament, to drag the writer from his home and friends for trial in England. This unutterable outrage was stubbornly and brilliantly contested by Curran in one of the most masterful of his orations.

This was the last great national cause in which he participated and soon afterward, on the death of Pitt and the inception into power of the Whigs, with whom he had affiliated with Grattan, he was appointed master of the rolls—and his brilliant public career was over.

IV

The years intervening between Curran's appointment and his death were marked by a gradual decline of power. More and more he began to drift, seeking diversion in society, reserving his brilliancy for the dinner table, and this brings us to another Curran —the clever wit, the boon companion.

During the whole of his life Curran was a social genius. In early life he had been one of the moving spirits of the celebrated order of Saint Patrick, or "Monks of the Screw"—a society consisting of men of high order of intellect, conceived in a spirit of conviviality. These brilliant men met every Saturday evening during the law term in Saint Kevin Street, Dublin, and frequently at Curran's country home, which he called The Priory. The rooms in Dublin were furnished in a monkish fashion and the members appeared in the habit of the order, a black tabinet domino. Here met and mingled such men as Curran, Lord Avonmore, one of the finest scholars of his day; the Marquis of Townsend; Lord Mornington, the composer; Grattan and Henry Flood, the eloquent Hussey Burgh and the lamented Kilwarden—the very full flower of Irish genius.

During the greater part of Curran's life his beautiful home, The Priory, was a Mecca for the most brilliant men of the times. It was the special delight of the orator to gather about his board the most promising of the young men of the country. Of his life here we have some fascinating pictures from the recollections of Charles Phillips, the orator, who was a

frequent guest. "Never shall I forget my sensations when I first caught glimpse of the little man through the vista of the avenue," he writes. "There he was, as a thousand times afterward I saw him, in a dress which you would have imagined he had borrowed from his tipstaff—his hands on his sides, his face almost parallel with the horizon—his under lip protruded." The heart of Curran has been shown us through these recollections, and we are permitted to see him in all his moods—for he was a man of moods and passed from the very exaltation of happiness to the most dismal melancholy within an hour. It was not unusual for him, after having dazzled a brilliant company far into the night with his wit and eloquence, to wander out alone, or with a single companion, into the exquisite gardens of The Priory, where he would ramble until dawn, lost in the most gloomy reflections. Thus in his life, as in his speeches, tears and laughter were close together. While visiting the cottage of Robert Burns and observing a drunken man, he burst into tears. We have a picture of him on board a packet reading the pathetic story of Clarissa Harlowe with the tears streaming down his cheeks. He was never able to read *The Sorrows of Werther* with dry eyes.

His social triumphs, however, were not confined to Dublin, for he was a frequent visitor to London, where the most exclusive and brilliant houses were honored by his presence, and here he came into contact with the great minds of the literary, professional and political worlds. It was at Holland House that Lord Byron first met him. "He beats everybody," declared the poet. "His imagination is beyond the human and his humor perfect.

He has fifty faces and twice as many voices when he mimics." And on another occasion Byron wrote: "The riches of his Irish imagination were exhaustless. I have heard that man speak more poetry than I have ever written, though I saw him seldom." Apropos of the "fifty faces," Lawrence, the artist, after seeing him in one of his rare moments of animation, exclaimed: "I have never painted your portrait at all." We have it from Doctor Birkbeck, who roomed with him in Paris for five weeks, that during that time there were not five consecutive minutes within which Curran could not make them both laugh and cry. Horne Tooke, who frequently had an opportunity to compare Curran with Richard Brinsley Sheridan, described them. "Sheridan's wit was like steel," he wrote, "highly polished and sharpened for display and use, while Curran's was a mine of virgin gold, incessantly crumbling away from its own richness." This suggests Byron's comparison of Curran with Lord Erskine, the only forensic orator in the British Isles who rose to the dignity of a rival:

"There also were two wits by acclamation,
Longbow from Ireland, Strongbow from the Tweed,
Both lawyers, and both men of education;
But Strongbow's wit was of more polished breed:
Longbow was richer in imagination,
As beautiful and bounding as a steed,
But sometimes stumbling over a potato,
While Strongbow's best things might have come from Cato.

"Strongbow was like a new-tuned harpsichord,
But Longbow wild as an Æolian harp,
With which the winds of heaven can claim accord,
And make a music either flat or sharp.

Of Strongbow's talk you would not change a word:
At Longbow's phrases you might sometimes carp.
Both wits—one born so, and the other bred,
His by the heart—his rival by the head."

Apropos of the comparison between Curran and Erskine, an interesting story is told of their meeting at a dinner at Carlton House, London. The royal host having turned the conversation to the profession of his brilliant guests, Lord Erskine said: "No man in the land need be ashamed to belong to the legal profession. For my part, of a noble family myself, I feel no degradation in practising it—it has added not only to my wealth, but to my dignity." Curran maintained a modest silence until the host, observing it, asked for his opinion. "Lord Erskine," he replied, "has so eloquently described all the advantages to be derived from his profession that I hardly thought my opinion worth adding. But perhaps it is—perhaps I am a better practical instance of its advantages than his lordship. He was ennobled by birth before he came to it, but it has"—with a bow to the host—"in my person raised the son of a peasant to the table of his prince."

It seems that Curran did not always fall down and worship all the English celebrities with whom he came in contact. He admired Sheridan, and looked upon Charles James Fox with something akin to awe. Of Doctor Johnson he entertained but a poor opinion. "Sir," he once said, "he was intolerant—an intolerable dogmatist—in learning, a pedant—in religion, a bigot—in manners, a savage—and in politics, a slave." Though very fond of Byron, he was disgusted with the poet's bathetic lines to his wife. "Here is a man,"

he said, "who first weeps over his wife and then dries his eyes on the public."

Toward the close of his life he entertained an ambition for a seat in the British house of commons, and in 1812 he stood for Newry, but after six days in the field he retired from the contest. The following year his health began to fail rapidly and he resigned his position and went over to Paris in the hope of reviving his spirits. A large part of the next three years were spent in London or Paris, and he spoke frequently at public dinners, but the old brilliancy was rapidly failing. While dining at the table of Tom Moore, in the spring of 1817, he suffered a slight stroke. He lingered through the summer, but on October fourteenth his eloquent tongue was forever silent. The funeral was private. Daniel O'Connell canceled an engagement on the continent to pay his respects along with Charles Phillips, the orator; Tom Moore, the poet, and Finnerty, the publisher, whose name has been saved from oblivion by the genius of the advocate who plead his cause.

V

The Irish race has produced greater statesmen, more profound lawyers, and possibly more ardent patriots, but it has not given to the world a greater orator than John Philpot Curran. The verdict of his contemporaries is overwhelming on that point. His published speeches, unsatisfactorily reported and never revised, are corroborative evidence of his marvelous eloquence. It is but fair to his fame to say that he never gave his consent to the publication of his orations, and that after their publication he offered two thousand five

hundred dollars for their suppression. No doubt a revision would have corrected many of the faults now ascribed to them. Some of these faults were due to the limitations of the reporter, and some errors in taste no doubt grew out of the trying circumstances under which they were delivered. They were not scholastic lectures laboriously written in the calm seclusion of the closet to please fastidious ears, but were necessarily extemporaneous effusions spoken in the white heat of battle in which the lives of men were at stake.

It is significant that whatever position he attained among his contemporaries was not due to physical attractions. He could not awe as Chatham could by his mere presence. On the contrary, he was a man of insignificant physical proportions, short and with the form of a youth, and naturally ungraceful. His face was without beauty. His complexion was rather muddy. Only his dark glistening eyes redeemed his countenance from the commonplace, and this only when fired by the genius within him. His voice was not strong, but his modulation and use of it was skilful, and was particularly effective in passages of pathos.

It is probable that his peculiar genius was derived from his intimate understanding of the heart of his people. He knew how to play upon their emotions because he had felt them. He knew how to utilize their passions and prejudices because he had them. His youthful days beneath the peasant's roof had taught him human nature. Thus, feeling as he spoke, he carried his hearers with him by his absolute sincerity—the highest attribute of eloquence.

He had, in addition to his natural gifts of nature, acquired a vocabulary unsurpassed by any orator who has spoken the English tongue; and usually, unless carried away by the fervor of the moment, he selected his words with fine discrimination. It was this extensive vocabulary that made it possible for him to balance his sentences so musically.

Many of his speeches were prepared while walking the streets of Dublin, or riding back and forth between the capital and his home at The Priory. It is said that most exquisite passages were conceived while alone in his library with his beloved violoncello. It is generally thought that his masterpiece was his defense of Rowan, the plan for which, covering but a few lines, and jotted down roughly on a piece of paper, follows:

"To arms—reform—Catholic emancipation—convention—now unlawful—consequences of conviction—trials before revolution—drowned—Lambert—Muir—character of R—furnace &c—Rebellion smothered stalks—redeeming spirit."

In an eloquent passage in his speech for Hervey he seems to be giving an illustration of his own art when he says:

"When you endeavor to convey an idea of a great number of barbarians practising a great variety of cruelties upon an incalculable multitude of sufferers, nothing defined or specific finds its way to the heart; nor is any sentiment excited save that of a general erratic commiseration. If, for instance, you wish to convey to the mind of an English matron the horror of that direful period when in defiance of the remonstrance of the ever to be lamented Abercromby, our poor people were surrendered

to the licentious brutality of the soldiery by the authority of the state, you would vainly endeavor to give her a general picture of lust, and rapine, and murder and conflagration. By endeavoring to comprehend everything, you would convey nothing. When the father of poetry wishes to convey the movements of contending armies and an embattled field, he exemplifies only, he does not describe—he does not venture to describe the perplexed and promiscuous conflicts of adverse hosts, but by the acts and fates of a few individuals he conveys a notion of the vicissitudes of the fight and the fortunes of the day. So should your story to her keep clear of generalities; instead of exhibiting the picture of an entire province, select a single object, and even in that single object, do not release the imagination of your hearer to the task by giving more than an outline. Take a cottage—place the affrighted mother by her orphaned daughters at the door, the paleness of death in her face, and more than its agonies in her heart—her aching heart, her anxious ears struggling through the mists of the closing day to catch the approaches of desolation and dishonor. The ruffian gang arrives—the feast of plunder begins—the cup of madness kindles in its circulation—the wandering glances of the ravisher become concentrated upon the shrinking victim; you need not dilate—you need not expatiate—the unpolluted mother to whom you tell the story of horror beseeches you not to proceed; she presses her child to her arms and bathes it in her tears; her fancy catches more than an angel's tongue could describe; in a single view she takes in the whole miserable succession of force, of profanation, of despair, of death. So it is in the question before us. If any man shall hear of this day's proceedings he can not be so foolish as to suppose that we have been confined to a single character like those now brought before you."

There are few things finer in the language than his tribute to the Volunteers of Ireland in his defense of Rowan, and few things that approach the superb

passage in the same speech, beginning with the words, "I speak in the spirit of the British law." There has probably never been an orator so capable of affecting pathos. Is there any wonder that he brought tears to the eyes of the callous in his touching description of the fate of Orr in his defense of Finnerty:

"Let me suppose that you had known the charge on which Mr. Orr was apprehended—the charge of abjuring that bigotry which had torn and disgraced his country, of pledging himself to restore the people of his country to their place in the constitution, and of binding himself never to be the betrayer of his fellow laborers in that enterprise; that you had seen him upon that charge removed from his industry and confined in a gaol; that through the long and lingering process of twelve tedious months you had seen him confined in a dungeon, shut out from the common use of air and of his limbs; that day after day you had remarked the unhappy captive, cheered by no sound but the cries of his family, or the clanking of his chains; that you had seen him at last brought to his trial; that you had seen the vile and perjured informer deposing against his life; that you had seen the tired and worn and terrified jury give in a verdict of death; that you had seen the same jury, when their returning sobriety had brought back their conscience, prostrate themselves before the humanity of the bench and pray that the mercy of the crown might save their characters from the approach of an involuntary crime, and their consciences from the torture of eternal self-condemnation, and their souls from the indelible stain of innocent blood. Let me suppose that you had seen the respite given, and that contrite and honest recommendation transmitted to that seat where mercy was supposed to dwell; that new and before unheard of crimes had been discovered against the informer; that the royal mercy seems to relent, and that a new respite is sent to the prisoner; that time is taken, as the learned

counsel for the crown has stated it, to see whether mercy could be extended or not; that, after that period of lingering deliberation passed, a third respite is transmitted; that the unhappy captive himself feels the cheering hope of being restored to a family that he adored, to a character that he had never stained, and to a country that he had ever loved; that you had seen his wife and children upon their knees, giving those tears to gratitude which their locked and frozen hearts could not give to despair, and imploring the blessings of eternal providence upon his head, who had graciously spared the father and restored him to his children; that you had seen the olive branch sent into the little ark, but no sign that the waters had subsided.

" 'Alas, nor wife, nor children more shall he behold,
Nor friends, nor sacred home.'

"No seraph mercy unbars his dungeon and leads him forth to life and light; but the minister of death hurries him to the scenes of suffering and shame; where, unmoved by the hostile array of artillery and armed men collected together, to secure, or to insult, or to disturb him, he dies with a solemn declaration of his innocence, and utters his last breath in a prayer for the liberty of his country."

The second illustration of Curran's power with pathos will be taken from his speech in the case of the King vs. Johnson, in which, after a long period of misunderstanding, he appealed so powerfully to the heart of Justice Avonmore upon the bench that tears rolled down the jurist's cheeks and a reconciliation was effected. There is a felicity of expression and a pensive melancholy in the appeal to the past that makes this one of the most beautiful passages to be found in Curran:

"But I cherish, too, the consolatory hope that I shall be able to tell them that I had an old and valued friend,

whom I would put above all the sweepings of their hall, who was of a different opinion; who had derived his ideas of civil liberty from the purest fountains of Athens and of Rome; who had fed the youthful vigor of his studious mind with the theoretic knowledge of their wisest philosophers and statesmen; and who had refined the theory into the quick and exquisite sensibility of moral instinct by contemplating the practise of their most illustrious examples; by dwelling on the sweet-souled piety of Cimon; on the anticipated christianity of Socrates; on the gallant and pathetic patriotism of Epaminondas; on the pure austerity of Fabricius. I would add that if he had seemed to hesitate, it was but for a moment; that his hesitation was but as the passing cloud that floats across the morning sun and hides it from the view, and does so for a moment hide it by involving the spectator without even approaching the face of the luminary: and this soothing hope I draw from the dearest and tenderest recollections of my life, from the remembrance of those Attic nights which we have spent with those admired and respected and beloved companions who have gone before us; over whose ashes the most precious tears of Ireland have been shed: yes, my lord, I see you do not forget them; I see their sacred forms passing in sad review before your memory; I see your pained and softened fancy recalling those happy meetings, when the innocent enjoyment of social mirth expanded into the nobler warmth of social virtue; and the horizon of the board became enlarged into the horizon of man; when the swelling heart conceived and communicated the pure and generous purpose; when my slenderer and younger taper imbibed its borrowed light from the more matured and redundant light of yours. Yes, my lord, we can remember those nights without any regret than that they can never more return, for

'We spent them not in toys, nor lust, nor wine,
But search of deep philosophy,
Wit, eloquence and poesy,
Arts which I loved, for they, my lord, were thine.'"

Sometimes Curran's humor was not taken kindly by the victim of his smile, as in the case of Doctor Duigenan, who fell counter to the orator in a debate on the Catholic emancipation bill and took the ridicule so seriously as to express a ferocious desire to kill the humorist. The doctor, in a bigoted speech, had mixed his history in a maudlin way, and denounced everybody, including Curran, whom he dubbed the "bottle holder of his party's chief." In his denunciation of members he had mispronounced some of their names, and Curran replied:

"Sure I am that if I had been the bottle holder the learned doctor would have had less reason to complain of me than my right honorable friend; for him I should have left perfectly sober, whilst it would very clearly appear that, with respect to the learned doctor, the bottle would not only have been managed fairly but generously; and if in furnishing him with liquor I had not furnished him with argument, I had at least furnished him with a good excuse for wanting it; with the best excuse for the confusion of history, and divinity, and civil law, and canon law—that rollicking mixture of politics and theology and antiquity with which he has overwhelmed the debate; for the havoc and carnage he has made of the population of the last age, and the fury with which he seems determined to exterminate and even to devour the population of this; and which urged him, after tearing and gnawing the character of the Catholics, to spend the last efforts of his rage with the most unrelenting ferocity in actually gnawing their names."

As a rule, however, Curran found the situation such as to call for a far more pointed denunciation of the characters he attacked than could be conveyed by sarcasm and humor. The bitterness of his assaults upon

the paid informers of the Castle sometimes led him into extreme expressions that have been much criticized as in bad taste. An illustration may be given in his description of the informer as one "who had been buried a man and left until his heart had time to fester and dissolve and then dug up—a witness." The use of such intemperate expressions can be traced to the extreme provocations of the times.

All in all, Curran is probably the greatest genius among the Irish orators. Although his fame was not achieved in addressing popular assemblies, the memory of his patriotic services is cherished by the most humble of the Irish peasants.

Poetry and passion—the coarse and the subtle—pathos and humor—and the music of words—these characterize and have immortalized the eloquence of John Philpot Curran.

IV

LORD PLUNKETT

The Conspiracy of Castlereagh and Pitt; the Degradation of the Irish Parliament; the Fight Against the Consummation of the Union

THE destruction of the legislative independence of Ireland and the consummation of the union by fair means or foul had been the ambition of more than one English statesman from the days of Cromwell, but the possibility of accomplishing the deed without serious protest from the Irish parliament or the people had never seemed so certain as when Pitt selected Castlereagh as the master of ceremonies. Henry Flood, whose lash of invective had fallen with such stinging effect upon the enemies of his country, had passed from the stage; and Henry Grattan, disgusted and nauseated by the stench of parliamentary corruption, had voluntarily retired from the scene. The major part of the members of the Irish parliament were either purchased or for sale, and there appeared to be no commanding genius of opposition to fear. The masses of the people looked with contempt upon a body of men who voluntarily ascended the auction block to be knocked down to the highest bidder. It was the policy of Pitt to hurry through with the dirty job with as little publicity as possible, and, in survey-

ing the field, he probably found no one who seemed capable of pillorying the monstrous transaction with an eloquence that would hold it up to the contemptuous contemplation of posterity.

It is a peculiarity of history, however, that dying nations and causes have usually called forth some orator of transcendent genius to sing the swan song. This phenomenon of history asserted itself unexpectedly in the transactions surrounding the shameful consummation of the union. The anticipated silence was broken by the stern protesting voice of one of the most consummate orators of Ireland. Step by step the government encountered a contest which has left ineffaceable scars upon the reputations of the prime minister who planned and the secretary for Ireland who executed the plan for the destruction of Irish independence. With wonderful audacity and brilliancy he exposed the conspiracy and in his masterful and terrible philippics he has drawn an indictment which all the apologists of English policy for a century have been unable to quash.

Nor was this his only claim to the gratitude of his country. One of the inducements held out by Pitt in favor of the union was that it would be speedily followed by the complete emancipation of the Catholics. Instead, however, the promise was speedily forgotten. It was the privilege of the great orator who had led the fight against the union to plead with unexampled ability in favor of the fulfilment of the promise on the floor of the imperial house of commons. He echoed there, in more conciliatory tones, the thunderous demands of O'Connell, and by sheer force of argument wrought a revolution in parliamentary sentiment.

And yet he has been unfortunate with posterity. Possibly it is because he played his most conspicuous part between the periods of Grattan and O'Connell—shut in between the mountains. The more probable explanation is to be found in the voracious manner in which he availed himself of the privileges of the union he had opposed, and in the sycophantic apologies he offered for his invective against Castlereagh. His insistence upon strictly constitutional methods of reformation, his unfeeling diatribe against Emmet as he stood helpless in the dock, his bitter antipathy to the agitation of Sheil and O'Connell, while consistent with his principles, have deprived him of the inspirational qualities that attach to the personalities of the patriot orators of Ireland. However, his magnificent eloquence entitles him to a permanent place among the first of the world's orators, and in his burning philippics against the union all lovers of Ireland have cause to cherish the memory of Lord Plunkett.

I

On July first, 1764, there was born of a Presbyterian minister a son who was destined to become one of the stoutest champions of the established church and the parliamentary spokesman of the Roman Catholics. The father of this remarkable child was Thomas Plunkett, a man of exceptional intellectuality and force, famous alike for social charm and polished eloquence. It appears to have been his oratorical brilliance which led him to the pastorate of the Strand Street chapel in Dublin, which was the wealthiest and most influential dissenting congregation in the country.

The charm of his society and the beauty of his sermons seem to have broken down all the barriers of sect and we find his friends and associates among the devotees of all churches and the followers of all professions. Indeed he appears to have been what we of to-day would call a "fashionable minister." In a society devoted to eloquence he was looked upon as the most fastidious critic of oratory in Dublin; and, in the days when the Irish house of commons resounded with the eloquence of some of the most gifted tongues ever heard within its walls, a comfortable seat in the stranger's gallery was allotted to him by courtesy. He was as improvident as brilliant, and, upon his death in 1778, he left his family utterly destitute. So great was his popularity, however, that a public subscription made it possible for his widow to live comfortably with her children.

From his earliest years William C. Plunkett was fortunate in his associates. After the regulation period in the preparatory schools of Dublin he entered Dublin University in his fifteenth year, in company with the son of the famous Barry Yelverton, and found himself thrown into competition with as brilliant an array of students as had ever been assembled at one time within those celebrated walls. Here he measured swords in youthful competition with Thomas A. Emmet the patriot, Charles Kendall Bushe the orator, William Magee the churchman, Peter Burrowes the lawyer, and Wolfe Tone the inspired revolutionist, who was destined to rob the scaffold of a victim through self-slaughter. It was a period of great intellectual activity and unrest and the debates of the historical society of the university, then a na-

tional institution, attracted the attention of the city and the attendance of prominent members of the Irish house of commons. The discussions usually involved political principles and policies then agitating the public mind. From the moment that Plunkett began to participate in the debates he was accorded, by common consent, the front rank as the most masterful of debaters and most eloquent of orators. During this preparatory period he found time to look down daily from the gallery of the house of commons upon the parliamentary battles then dominated by the genius of Grattan and Flood; and his love of country was fanned into flame by the spectacle of the members of parliament marching through the streets of the capital between the long stern lines of armed Volunteers on their way to the Castle to demand the rights of Ireland. The visions of that day, with their auspicious promise, must have hovered over him in that dismal hour when he himself stood almost alone in the house of commons, battling with the desperation of despair against the destruction of the legislative independence of his country.

On leaving the university, Plunkett proceeded to London, where he entered as a student of law at Lincoln's Inn in 1784. Here he was forced by his poverty to live in the most frugal manner. We find in one of his letters the whimsical complaint that "not a gentleman or even a lady in the neighborhood has invited me to their house"; and we catch a glimpse of his shabby appearance in another complaint that "t'other evening some fellows had the impudence to take me for a barber." While digging into the dry tomes of the law he continued his oratorical studies, and, in one of his

Richard Rothwell, R.H.A. Photograph by Geoghegan

William Conyngham Plunkett

letters to a friend, we are permitted to smile upon him "assailing the trees of Richmond Park."

The Dublin to which he returned to practise his profession was gay, and the average lawyer was quite as ambitious for a reputation as a bounder as for fame as a pleader. Upon this idleness and frivolity Plunkett turned his back, and his close application, together with his university reputation, made his progress rapid. During the first twelve years after his admission he held aloof from politics. He found himself out of touch with the times. The flamboyant corruption of the ruling classes was repulsive, but his instinctive conservatism rebelled against the revolutionary trend of the more patriotic element. He found himself without a party. So uncompromising was his antipathy to revolutionary methods that he early broke completely with Thomas Addis Emmet, and while he parted with Wolfe Tone with more regret and in a more kindly spirit it was a decisive parting.

It was inevitable, however, that a young man of Plunkett's majestic genius should be drawn into the vortex of politics, and particularly at a time when the governmental conditions in Ireland required the services of her brightest and most courageous sons. In 1798 Lord Charlemont, who had introduced so many promising youths to public life, and set the feet of Edmund Burke in the path he was to tread to glory, was looking around for another protégé. His attention was directed to Plunkett, who was invited to Charlemont House. A prolonged conference ensued, during which the young man explained in detail his views upon the public questions then pending or imminent. It developed that they agreed upon all points

but one. Plunkett even then had become ardently attached to the cause of Catholic emancipation, while the older man, who had headed the Volunteers, was still determined upon Protestant ascendency. Because of this disagreement Plunkett declined the proffer of a seat, but was persuaded to call again on the promise that the obstacle might be removed without the compromising of principles. On the second call Lord Charlemont agreed that Plunkett should go into parliament absolutely unhampered by any pledges, and with this understanding the young orator entered upon the career in the Irish parliament which was to be so brief and yet so glorious.

II

In accepting the proffered seat from Lord Charlemont it appears that Plunkett was persuaded, because of their common determination, to resist to the last ditch any attempt on the part of the government to rob Ireland of her legislative independence. It was no longer a secret that this was the ambition of Pitt, the prime minister. The situation within the parliament could scarcely have been worse. The seed of corruption sown by a succession of ministers had brought forth such an abundant harvest that an honest man could hardly exist in the house of commons. Already Henry Grattan, hopelessly disgusted with prevailing conditions, had registered an impotent protest by withdrawing from the house and seeking the seclusion of his country home. At the time Plunkett took his seat in the house the government was positive at all times of a majority of one hundred in support of ministerial

policies. We have it on English authority that in 1798 the government had at its disposal eighty-six members who held proprietary seats, twelve who were members of the government, forty-four who were placemen, thirty-two who were subservient because of promises of governmental favor, and twelve who appear to have been actually honest in their support. As against this solid phalanx there were twenty-nine who were rated as thoroughly independent both of the government and of party alignment. The active opposition consisted of thirty-two nominees of Whig proprietors and fifty-two who belonged to the popular party.

Such was the condition of affairs when Pitt sent over Cornwallis, as lord lieutenant, and the infamous Lord Castlereagh, as secretary, with instructions to force through the consummation of the union by fair means or foul. The prospects for an effective opposition to the machinations of the ministry seemed practically hopeless. Indeed, the *Dublin Evening Post,* in commenting on Plunkett's entrance upon his parliamentary duties, coupled a high tribute to his integrity and ability with the pessimistic prediction that he would find himself handicapped hopelessly by the character of the material out of which he would have to build a legitimate opposition.

It is but fair to say that Cornwallis found the work assigned him a "dirty work" and not at all to his taste, and that the duty of purchasing the liberties of a people through the corruption of a parliament which represented only the Protestant minority and misrepresented that, was left to the more wily and unscrupulous Castlereagh. How well he accomplished his miserable work the world now knows. During more

than a century, and until quite recently, no historian has had the temerity to utter a word in his defense. At the time of the union he was a young man of extraordinary capacity, of brilliant mentality, cold, calculating, ambitious, impervious to attack, and absolutely without the slightest semblance of shame. That Pitt was an excellent judge of men may be gathered from his selection of this man to lead the forces of corruption on the floor of the Irish house of commons. But such a colossal scheme of corruption was quite beyond the capacity of Castlereagh alone, and again we find the government fortunate in his coadjutor. This was none other than the secretary to Castlereagh, a low creature by the name of Cook, who possessed neither feeling, scruple nor prejudice.

The purposes of Pitt, operating through his Irish representatives, was twofold. His idea was to create a reign of terror through the country and thereby frighten the timid into the arms of England for protection, and in this he was unintentionally aided by the work of the United Irishmen. He expected to purchase a safe majority of the house and banked considerably, and not without justification, upon that indifference of the people as to the fate of their parliament, which grew out of a prevailing contempt for its corruption.

In looking over the personnel of parliament Plunkett found a few men of irreproachable integrity and unpurchasable patriotism upon whom he could rely for cooperation. There were his old friends of the historical society, the brilliant Bushe and the eloquent Burrowes, and there were Sir Laurence Parsons,

George Knox, and that unexcelled parliamentarian, George Ponsonby.

While the preliminary negotiations for the wholesale purchase were in progress the subject of the union was not broached, but during this brief respite we find Plunkett participating in an attack upon the government in connection with a bill providing for the case of a proprietor of a newspaper leaving the country to avoid the consequences of an article printed in his paper. This was inspired by a desire to reach the *Dublin Press,* the organ of the United Irishmen, whose proprietor was at that time in Paris. Incidentally it was intended as an effective blow at the liberty of the press. It provided that the editor of a paper and two others should each give security for one thousand pounds, the ministers to determine arbitrarily upon the acceptability of the two securities. The speech of Plunkett on this occasion is chiefly interesting in that it shows the militant spirit in which he approached the final battle with the powers of darkness.

"The liberty of the press in Ireland would receive a vital wound," he said. "Every channel of communication with the great bulk of the people would be shut up, except those which government might think proper to keep open to blazon their own praise and their own virtue. There would reign throughout the country a deadly silence, except where the venal voice of some hireling print might break in upon it by mutilated and false statements of facts, by misrepresentation of principles, or by base and servile adulation of its masters. . . . The licentiousness of the press has been complained of: I will tell government a better remedy against it than this bill affords. Let them act in such a manner

as to be above its obloquy. Let them restore the constitution. Let them reform the abuses which pollute every department. Let them reform the parliament. Let them mitigate their system of coercion. Let them conciliate the people. Then they may laugh at the slanders of a licentious press. They will have a better defense against its malice than this unconstitutional measure can afford them."

It is probable that the speech of Plunkett was responsible for the fact that the security was reduced to five hundred pounds, but with that exception the bill was pushed to its passage. In the extract just cited, we are given an idea of the reforms for which Plunkett would have labored had the parliament been spared. But it was already doomed. Even as he spoke of reforming the parliament, Castlereagh and Cook were busy in buying its assassins.

The opposition, however, determined to force the fighting, and a little later we find Sir Laurence Parsons moving for a committee of the whole house to consider the prevailing discontents, their cause and cure. This was inspired by the insurrection of the United Irishmen. In opposing the motion, Castlereagh declared that nothing would conciliate the United Irishmen but the establishment of a republic; that the excesses of the soldiery in meeting the emergency was unpreventable; and that existing laws were sufficient to deal with the situation. Here Plunkett stepped into the breach with a speech of audacity and brilliance in which he challenged the contention of Castlereagh that the discontent was limited to the United Irishmen and insisted that the people had abundant grievance.

"The rebellion of the mind by which you are assailed," he said, "is dreadful and not to be combatted by force. You have tried that remedy for three years and the experiment has failed. You have stopped the mouth of the public by a convention bill—have committed the property and the liberty of the people to the magistrate by the insurrection act; you have suspended the habeas corpus act; you have had, and you have used, a strong military force—as great a force as you could call for; and there has been nothing that would tend to strengthen your hands or enable you to beat down this formidable conspiracy that you have not been invested with. What effect has your system produced? Discontent and sedition have grown threefold under your management.

"Gentlemen have talked of French principles. These principles have grown indeed, but it is because they were not resisted by proper means. I wonder not that when assailed by these principles the rotten fabric of the French monarchy tumbled into atoms; nor do I wonder that they carried terror and destruction through the despotisms of Europe. But I did hope that when the hollow specter of French democracy approached us it would have fled before the mild and chaste dignity of the British constitution. It would have done so if you had not destroyed the constitution before it reached us. You opposed it then with force, and its progress grew upon you. Restore the constitution and it will defend you from this monster. Reform your parliament. Cease to bestow upon the worthless the wealth you extract from the bowels of your people. Let the principles of that revolution which you profess to admire regulate your conduct, and the horrid shade will melt into air before you."

Thus the repetition—"Reform the parliament," "Restore the constitution." It was to this hope that Plunkett clung with the tenacity of desperation. But the machine of utter destruction was even now at

work and the motion of Parsons was defeated by the minions of Castlereagh.

The revolution of '98 soon broke out with all its fury and the government thought the hour auspicious for the proposition of the union. The parliament was packed by the government and Castlereagh was satisfied. It was decided that Cook should gradually prepare the public for the proposal and this was done through the publication of a pamphlet called, *Arguments For and Against the Union,* which created a sensation and was speedily answered by Bushe in a brilliant pamphlet which he called, *Cease Your Funning, or The Rebel Exposed.* These were followed by numerous pamphlets for and against, of more or less merit as literary productions.

Soon the public awoke to the danger. The Lawyers' Corps of Dublin was called together and spirited speeches against the union were made—only to elicit the smiles of the Castle. Bankers, merchants, various trades and professions followed in quick succession, but all these manifestations of general disapproval were treated by Castlereagh with derision. Finally, in December of 1798, the *Anti-Union* newspaper appeared and thirty numbers were issued containing brilliant contributions from Grattan, Plunkett, Bushe and Burrowes. The most clever satire of Plunkett was a letter written by Miss Ireland concerning the proposal of Mr. Bull (England) of marriage (union). The young lady (Ireland) explains the motives of Mr. Bull.

"These pretensions of his arose from his natural pride and imperiousness of disposition joined to a sordid and dishonest wish to get possession of my family estate, to

which he had no other claim than that it lay contiguous to his own, and that we both held under the same landlord."

She then goes on to lay the blame for the trouble to "the ill-advised chimerical plans of a head clerk" (Pitt) who "has contrived to introduce into my house a set of his own creatures, whose object is to excite dissensions among the family." She mentions one of these by name "a scullion in Mr. Bull's family who I was prevailed upon to hire as a shop-boy, though he was very ragged and had no discharge to produce." (Cook.) She complains that this "scullion" had succeeded in corrupting many of her "domestics" (members of parliament). Such brilliant satires of course had no more effect on the government than a lot of peas thrown against the hide of an elephant. When Cornwallis opened parliament with an address from the throne in January, 1799, he cautiously broached the subject of the union—and the fight was on in earnest.

In determining upon the character of his speeches on the subject Plunkett divided the membership of parliament into three groups. Those who were purchased he proposed to hold up to contempt, those who were opposed to the union he intended to encourage, and the wavering he hoped to win by argument. His plan was to assail Castlereagh with a ferocity that would weaken him in the face of the wavering.

The address of the lord lieutenant was delivered on January twenty-second and the debate began at one o'clock on the afternoon of that day. The house sat in continuous session until eleven o'clock on the following morning. Sir John Parnell led off with an attack and

was followed by numerous speakers along a similar line. That Castlereagh contemplated intimidation as one of his weapons was manifested early when one speaker made a significant reference to the government supporters and the suggestion was made to take his words down. At this Plunkett rose.

"I have no idea that the freedom of debate shall be controlled by such interruptions," he said. "I do not conceive that my honorable friend is out of order, and when my turn comes to speak, I shall repeat these charges in still stronger language, if possible, and indulge gentlemen at the other side of the house with an opportunity of taking down my words if they have any fancy to do so."

A little later the speaker who had been threatened demanded: "Is it not well known that there are votes in this house influenced by the minister?" At this a motion was made to take down his words and again Plunkett broke in with the suggestion that "if they are taken down the house will be committed to an inquiry into the truth of the allegation." This bold declaration had its effect and the speaker was permitted to proceed. At length Castlereagh rose to reply and his speech, replete with sneers, was ridiculously weak as an argument. When he resumed his seat Plunkett rose to answer him. It was now between six and seven o'clock in the morning. The dreary light of a winter day cast weird shadows in the house. The massive face of Plunkett was corrugated with the lines of thought and anxiety and suppressed passion. His metallic voice rang out defiantly, challengingly, in awful warning. It was soon evident that there was

one man in the house who could neither be purchased nor intimidated.

"But, Sir," he said, "the freedom of discussion which has taken place on this side of the house has, it seems, given great offense to gentlemen on the treasury bench. They are men of nice and punctilious honor, and they will not endure that anything shall be said which implies a reflection on their untainted and virgin integrity. They threatened to take down the words of an honorable gentleman who spoke before me because they conveyed an insinuation; and I promised them on that occasion that if the fancy for taking down words continued, I would indulge them in it to the top of their bent. Sir, I am determined to keep my word with them, and I now will not insinuate, but I will directly assert that, base and wicked as is the object proposed, the means used to effect it have been more flagitious and abominable.

"Do you choose to take down my words? Do you dare me to the proof?

"Sir, I have been induced to think that we had at the head of the executive government of this country a plain, honest soldier, unaccustomed to, and disdaining the intrigues of politics, and who, as an additional evidence of the directness and purity of his views, had chosen for his secretary a simple and honest youth whose inexperience was the voucher of his innocence; and yet I will be bold to say that during the viceroyalty of this unspotted veteran, and during the administration of this unassuming stripling—within these last six weeks, a system of black corruption has been carried on within the walls of the Castle which would disgrace the annals of the worst period of the history of either country.

"Do you choose to take down my words?

"I need call no witness to your bar to prove them. I see two right honorable gentlemen sitting within your walls who have long and faithfully served the crown, and who have been dismissed because they dared to express a sentiment in favor of the freedom of their coun-

try. I see another honorable gentleman who has been forced to resign his place as commissioner of the revenue because he refused to cooperate in this dirty job of a dirty administration.

"Do you dare to deny this?

"I say that at this moment the threat of dismissal from office is suspended over the heads of the members who now sit around me, in order to influence their votes on the question of this night, involving everything that can be sacred or dear to man.

"Do you desire to take down my words? Utter the desire and I will prove the truth of them at your bar."

After a terrible invective aimed at Castlereagh, whose beautiful wife looked down from the gallery, Plunkett continued while the house sat in awed wonder:

"I make the assertion deliberately—I repeat it, and I call on any man who hears me to take down my words. You have not been elected for this purpose. You are appointed to make laws and not legislatures. You are appointed to act under the constitution, not to alter it. You are appointed to exercise the functions of legislators and not to transfer them. And if you do so your act is a dissolution of the government. You resolve society into its original elements and no man is bound to obey you. . . . When you transfer you abdicate, and the great original trust reverts to the people, from whom it issued. Yourselves you may extinguish, but parliament you can not extinguish. It is enthroned in the hearts of the people. It is enshrined in the sanctuary of the constitution. It is immortal as the island which it protects. As well might the frantic suicide hope that the act which destroys his miserable body should extinguish his eternal soul. Again, I therefore warn you, you do not dare to lay your hands on the constitution; it is above your power."

Then turning again to Castlereagh, who had asked that the question be discussed with calmness and composure, he exclaimed in one of the most eloquent outbursts in the language:

"I am called on to surrender my birthright and my honor, and I am told that I should be calm and should be composed. National pride. Independence of our country. These, we are told by the minister, are only vulgar topics fitted for the meridian of the mob, but unworthy to be mentioned to such an enlightened assembly as this; they are trinkets and gewgaws fit to catch the fancy of childish and unthinking people like you, Sir, or like your predecessor in that chair, but utterly unworthy the consideration of this house or of the matured understanding of the noble lord who condescends to instruct us. Gracious God! We see a Perry reascending from the tomb, and raising his awful voice to warn us against the surrender of our freedom, and we see that the proud and virtuous feelings which warmed the breast of that aged and venerable man are only calculated to excite the contempt of this youthful philosopher, who has been transplanted from the nursery to the cabinet to outrage the feelings and the understanding of the country."

It was in conclusion that Plunkett referred to the efforts of the minister to create internal dissensions with the view to making easy the overthrow of the constitution and made his famous vow which he was never permitted to forget in the later days when he and Castlereagh formed a mutual admiration society:

"They (ministers) have united every rank and description of men by the pressure of this grand and momentous subject; and I tell them that they will see every honest and every independent man in Ireland rally round her constitution, and merge every other consideration in his

opposition to this ungenerous and odious measure. For my part, I will resist it to the last gasp of my existence and with the last drop of my blood, and when I feel the hour of my dissolution approaching I will, like the father of Hannibal, take my children to the altar and swear them to eternal hostility against the invaders of their country's freedom."

The effect of this powerful speech was magical and the government was defeated by a majority of one.

Two days later the debate was renewed on the report on the address when Parsons, now determined to follow up his advantage, moved to amend through the expurgation of the paragraph relating to the union. The house was in session until noon on the following day and the government was defeated by a majority of five.

The tools of the Castle, burning under the scorpion lash of Plunkett, were now more than ever determined to resort to intimidation, and, while they had lacked the moral courage to stop Plunkett in his castigation, they now conceived of another plan which smacks very much of a conspiracy to murder. Castlereagh himself had thrown out the idea, although probably not this special suggestion, in his reply to Plunkett in which he had hinted at a duel. This led to the formation of the notorious Union Dueling Club which grew out of a dinner at Castlereagh's home attended by a number of the fighting members of the mercenaries. After the wine had flowed freely it was suggested that each man make the honor of the government his own and act accordingly. But even in this the hirelings were checkmated. The moment the report of the meeting at Castlereagh's got out a sim-

ilar meeting was held at Charlemont House, and had the members of Castlereagh's fighting squad seen fit to carry out their threat they would doubtless have been accommodated to their hearts' content.

After the second defeat of the government, Castlereagh moved for an adjournment until February seventh with the evident intention of awaiting further instructions from Pitt. No more was heard of the union until in May when the matter was forced upon the house by a motion to the effect that the speaker should issue a writ for the return of a member for Kilmallock in the place of C. S. Oliver, who had accepted the escheatorship of Munster, a position similar to the Chiltern Guards in England. This led to a pointed question, aimed at Castlereagh, as to why this place had not been offered to Colonel Cole. To the query Castlereagh sat mute. At this Plunkett entered the debate with a severe castigation of Castlereagh's contemptuous silence and the direct and explicit charge that the government was using its patronage for purposes of corruption. The motion which followed to grant a pension of ten pounds a year to Cole led to another debate in which one purchased creature of the crown exposed his hand by the insinuation that the enemies of the union were "also" interested from selfish motives. This was only another peg upon which Plunkett hastened to hang another direct charge of corruption:

"I wish that the gentleman had bestowed some of his indignation on the conduct which gave rise to the present debate; and if a conduct the most base and flagrant could inspire terms of disapprobation, the honorable and learned member must certainly have recovered the use

of his tongue. He would then have had to reprobate the most shameful hypocrisy—the most scandalous effrontery; and the warmth of his eloquence and the freedom of his manner would have been well employed in reprehending the conduct of a minister who had not only thrown away the substance, but the semblance of virtue."

Lord Cornwallis prorogued parliament on the first of June with the announcement that the government would bring on the question of the union again at the earliest opportunity in the next session. It was during the recess that Cornwallis made his celebrated union tour of Ireland soliciting signatures of all classes, down to the very dregs, in favor of the governmental project—a tour graphically and brilliantly described by Plunkett in a passage which will be cited later on.

When parliament met on January fifteenth, 1800, the great and final debate on the union was forced. In his address from the throne, Cornwallis failed to mention the union, and when, at the conclusion, the hirelings of the Castle moved an address echoing the Cornwallis speech, Parsons moved an amendment to the effect that the house would never tolerate the union. In his speech in support of his motion Parsons charged that the failure to mention the union was due to a desire on the part of the minister to take the house at a disadvantage. At this Castlereagh replied that it had been the intention to submit the project of the union in a separate address. The debate followed, and in the course of it the work accomplished by Castlereagh during the recess was disclosed when Doctor Brown, of the University of Dublin, who had violently opposed the union in the last

session, rose to support Castlereagh. The moment he sat down Plunkett took the floor. Referring to the changed attitude of Brown he said:

"What change has taken place? Has the measure changed its nature? Or the minister his objects, or the countries their relations? No, you shall know the changes that have taken place—I will unmask the men who have dared to come into the midst of parliament and people to purchase their liberties by sordid bribery and to subdue their spirits by lawless force, and if I can not awaken the feelings of honor or virtue in their hearts, will call the blush of shame into their cheeks."

In the speech that followed Plunkett surpassed himself in brilliancy, and several passages will be cited later as illustrating certain features of his eloquence. His historical review of the relations of the two countries was masterful and significant, all tending to show the utter unreliability of promises on the part of the ministers of the crown. There is something of pathos in his discussion of the rebellion of '98 and the treatment accorded the loyal element which had armed itself in behalf of the crown only to find the project of the union again forced upon them:

"I do not wish to inquire too minutely why the embers of rebellion have been so long suffered to exist; I do not wish to derogate from the praise to which the noble lord may be entitled for his clemency. Its very excesses, if they do not claim praise, are at least entitled to indulgence; but when I see that all the rays of mercy and forbearance are reserved to gild the brow of the viceroy, and that all the odium of harshness and severity is flung upon the parliament; when I see the clemency of the chief governor throwing its mantle over the mid-

night murderer; when I see it holding parley with the armed rebel in the field; and when I see the task of making war against the victim in his grave and the infant in the cradle thrown by the same government upon the parliament, I can not avoid suspecting that there is something more than the mere milk of human kindness in the forbearance on the one part, and something more than mere political caution in the severities of the other. But, sir, this rebellion was subdued by the parliament and the people of Ireland; and before the country had a breathing time; before the loyalist had time to rest from his labors; before the traitor had received his punishment or his pardon; whilst we were all stunned by the stupendous events which we had scarcely passed; whilst the ground was yet smoking with the blood of an O'Neill and of a Mountjoy, the wicked conspiracy was announced which was to rob their country of its liberties and their minor children of their birthright. With a suspended habeas corpus act, with the military tribunals in every county, the overwhelming and irretrievable measure of union was announced for the free, enlightened and calm discussion of an Irish parliament, and with all these engines of terror still suspended over our heads it is again submitted to them."

But eloquence and truth and justice could not hope to prevail over a bought and paid for parliament, and all these bitter assaults and invectives of Plunkett were received, for the most part, by Castlereagh in unruffled silence.

The stage was now set for the final act. After Plunkett resumed his seat one of the Castle spokesmen began an attack upon Plunkett which was never finished after the speaker caught the contemptuous sneer upon the face of the orator. And after this man concluded, Henry Grattan, worn and ill, who had hurried to Dublin in the hope of stemming the tide, was

Sir T. Lawrence, Pinx.

Viscount Castlereagh

all but carried into the house when even the hardened Castlereagh followed the example of the entire house in rising to his feet as a tribute to the indomitable patriot. By taking his place beside Plunkett, Grattan recognized him as the head of the opposition he himself had so often led. He spoke for two hours, sitting. The vote was taken. The government won with a majority of forty-two. And in that majority history has read of the corrupt activity of Lord Castlereagh during the recess.

The rest is briefly told. The government hurriedly followed up its advantage and the parliament of Ireland passed from existence. The work of Plunkett had failed in that he had been unable to prevent the purchase of a parliament; but his immortal speeches of protest have been a heritage to posterity in Ireland, and have been echoed from generation to generation, until the world has come to understand the infamy of the transaction. Lord Castlereagh passed from Ireland to a political career in England. His last action was to push through parliament an act suspending the writ of habeas corpus in Ireland. One August day, twenty-two years after the union, he cut his throat. His despotic principles had made him hated in England as in Ireland, and the multitude assembled at Westminster Abbey, shouted execrations on his coffin as it was removed from the hearse. It was Lord Byron who expressed the universal verdict in the lines:

> "So he has cut his throat? He? Who?
> The man who cut his country's long ago."

The end of Lord Clare was quite as miserable. His

biographer, O'Flannigan, has damned him with the epitaph: "He was the pivot on which all the movements of the Castle turned, the center from which all its schemes and designs radiated; his words were strong as written law with a succession of administrations." Clever, courageous, eloquent beyond any of the other tools of the Castle, he won the admiration and commendation of Pitt only to shock his master later on by the brutality of his proposals. He was a slight delicate man but haughty and insolent. His character speaks from the canvas of Hamilton. The union accomplished, the disreputable work done, Pitt had no further use for his tool, and Clare's brief experience in the English house of lords was one of isolation. He died, disappointed and embittered, one year after the union, and was buried with much pomp in St. Peter's churchyard, Dublin. As his remains were being conveyed to the grave, the people in the streets, as in the case of Castlereagh, hooted the expression of their hate and horror. He died despised in Ireland.

After the fall of the parliament Plunkett appears to have had some difficulty in adjusting himself to the new order of things. It probably appealed to him in the light of a personal calamity, for the celebrity and notoriety he had attained during the battle over the union had made him a national hero. The consummation of the union dimmed his prospects. Dublin became for a season as melancholy as a deserted banquet hall. The parliament house, now closed, loomed dismally like a sepulcher. The town houses of famous members of the late parliament were closed

and society underwent an eclipse. There seemed no possibility of the restoration of the parliament except through revolution, and to measures of violence Plunkett was then, as ever afterward, a bitter enemy. For a time he is said to have meditated migration either to England or the United States. Fortunately for his peace of mind his legal practise suffered no diminution, and in time he appears to have recovered his spirits and to have become reconciled to the union —a reconciliation which ultimately became so complete as to have deprived him of much of the popularity he had won.

Nothing has done so much to injure his reputation among his countrymen as his unfortunate participation in the prosecution of Robert Emmet. The fact that he was soon afterward appointed solicitor-general has given all too much ground for suspecting that his bitter attack upon the unfortunate martyr was intended as an olive branch to the government. It is but just to say however that his course at this time was in strict conformity with the principles of his lifetime—his insistence upon constitutional methods of opposition and his abhorrence of any policy suggestive of disorder. As time went on, however, he appeared to depart more and more from his original attitude until at length we find him holding office under the same Pitt who had planned the union, entering into the closest relations with the Castlereagh against whom he had hurled his invectives, and becoming one of the most ardent of imperialists. He was never permitted to forget his oath to swear his children to an eternal enmity to the invaders of the freedom of his

country, especially when he accepted a lucrative position under the government and found easy berths for some of these same children.

When he entered the imperial house of commons in 1807, on the solicitation of Lord Grenville, with whom he was politically affiliated throughout his subsequent career, the determining factor appears to have been his desire to serve his country on the emancipation proposition. From the moment he took the oath until the passage of the Relief bill in 1829 he labored unceasingly and effectively to strike the civil shackles from the limbs of his Catholic fellow countrymen, and his eloquence contributed largely toward softening the Protestant animosities of England and the elimination of prejudices. While he was working assiduously in the house of lords and Grattan in the commons, O'Connell was essentially the leader about whose career must be woven the story of the successful fight. The work of Plunkett, however, was of inestimable value to the cause. His speech in favor of Catholic rights delivered in 1813 was characteried by Castlereagh as one "never to be forgotten;" that of 1821 was pronounced by Sir Robert Peel to "stand nearly the highest in point of ability and eloquence of any ever heard in the house." We shall see that the determining cause of the final victory was the genius of O'Connell. Too much credit can not be given to Plunkett, who fought the battle in the very house of the enemies of Ireland, and through his tact and eloquence compelled the capitulation of an ancient prejudice and dissipated an ancient fear. After the passage of the Relief bill his appearances in the house of peers became less frequent and finally ceased altogether.

III

Upon his appointment as chancellor of Ireland in 1830, Lord Plunkett entered upon the last phase of his career—the last and least creditable. A great lawyer, he was not a great judge. As the years went by he was removed more and more from the view of the public, and long before his retirement he had ceased to attract attention. He was a butterfly embalmed in a rich ointment. Eleven years later he found that notwithstanding his often reiterated assertion that England had learned how to treat Ireland as an equal, he was to England nothing but an Irishman. After his distinguished services, at an hour when he was considered the greatest living son of the green isle, he was shamefully, ruthlessly, thrust aside and literally driven from the bench. The wound never healed. An old man now, he set out upon his travels, and lingered long in Rome, where he found the classic atmosphere extremely fascinating. Then he returned to Ireland and took up his residence at his beautiful country home at Old Connaught, situated under the Sugar-loaf mountain on the border of the county of Wicklow. Hither he had often turned even during the days of his greatest activity. Hither many a time had Grattan driven from his place a few miles distant for an evening under the roof of the great orator. Here Sir Walter Scott lingered for several days while enjoying the surrounding scenery. Occasionally he would go to London for an evening at Holland House, but he preferred to remain at Old Connaught surrounded by his children and grandchildren and friends. Sometimes in his melancholy moments he would drive

to a near-by mountain whence he could look down upon the Four Courts of Dublin in the hazy distance; and often he would drive along the margin of the bay of Bantry, pausing to chat with the children who had been taught to look with reverence upon the old man who had become as a child again. His mind lost its cunning before his body lost its strength and the last years of his life were spent in intellectual twilight. At length, on January fourth, 1854, in his ninetieth year —more than half a century after his marvelous philippics against Castlereagh, and a quarter of a century after the completion of his work for Catholic emancipation, he died. He was buried in the Mount Jerome cemetery, near Dublin, and his bust was set up in the Four Courts of Dublin.

If Lord Brougham, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Castlereagh and many of their contemporaries were acceptable critics of oratory, Lord Plunkett was one of the very greatest orators of modern times. We can readily believe from the descriptions that have been handed down to us that something of the impression he invariably made upon his hearers may have been due to his imposing physical appearance. He was a man of commanding height and compactly built, suggesting the most unusual powers of physical endurance. His face was coarse, blunt and harsh, the sort of face capable of dominating a mob. His forehead was high and broad and in moments of mental exertion was deeply lined. His eyes were not notably expressive, although they are described by some who heard him in some of his greater efforts as shining with a steady steel-like luster. He appears to have been parsimonious with his gestures, and to have delivered many of his

most telling passages standing immobile as a statue. His favorite gesture was unique and consisted in raising both arms above his head, holding them in that position for a moment and bringing them down together at the close of a period with an overwhelming air of finality. His voice was not one of the attractive phases of his eloquence and seems to have been rather harsh, cold, metallic. Strangely enough the most satisfactory picture of Plunkett in action was painted in a poem, by Bulwer Lytton, which is so graphic and spirited as to be an essential part of any adequate comment upon his oratorical manner:

"But one there was to whom with joint consent
All yield the crown in that high argument.
Mark where he sits; gay flutters round the bar,
Gathering like moths attracted by the star.
In vain the ballet and the ball invite:
E'en beaux look serious—Plunkett speaks to-night.
Mark where he sits, his calm brow downward bent,
Listening, revolving, passive, yet intent.
Revile his cause: his lips vouchsafe no sneer;
Defend it: still from him there comes no cheer,
No sign without of what he feels or thinks;
Within, slow fires are hardening iron links.
Now one glance round, now upward turns the brow.
Hushed every breath; he rises—mark him now.
No grace in feature, no command in height,
Yet his whole presence fills and awes the sight.
Wherefore? you ask. I can but guide your guess.
Man has no majesty like earnestness.
His that rare warmth—collected central heat—
As if he strives to check the heart's loud beat,
Tame strong conviction and indignant zeal,
And leave you free to think as he must feel.
Tones slow, not loud, but deep drawn from the breast,
Action unstudied, and at times suppressed;

But as he neared some reasoning's massive close,
Strained o'er his bending head his strong arms rose,
And sudden fell, as if from falsehood torn
Some grey old keystone and hurled down with scorn.
His diction, that which most exalts debate:
Terse and yet smooth, nor florid, yet ornate;
Prepared enough; long meditated fact
By words at will made sinuous and compact
With gems the genius of the lamp must win,
Not scattered loose, but welded firmly in,
So that each ornament the most displayed,
Decked not the sheathe, but hardened more the blade:
Your eye scarce caught the dazzle of the show
The shield and cuirass crashed beneath the blow."

So much for the purely physical phases of his eloquence. His style has commanded an admiration from English critics that has been withheld from the greater portion of Irish orators. Indeed his style does not contain the slightest resemblance to any of the other great Irish orators treated in this work. Some critics have compared the grave and serious eloquence of some of his passages dealing with history to the finest pages of Hallam; and in the philosophical reasoning, the marvelous range of his erudition, the purity of his diction, and the dignity and decorum of his rhetoric he probably suggests either Burke or Macaulay more than does any other speaker. We shall see a little later in one citation that in moments of emotion he resembles Fox.

In his introduction to the biography of Lord Plunkett by David Plunkett, Lord Brougham, one of England's greatest masters of eloquence, summarizes his view of Plunkett's art. "There never was a more argumentative speaker," he wrote, "or one more diffi-

cult to grapple with or answer; and the extraordinary impression produced by him was caused by the whole texture of his speeches being argumentative; the diction plain but forcible, the turn often epigrammatic; the figures as natural as they were unexpected; so that what had occurred to no one seemed as if every one ought to have anticipated it. But all—strong expressions, terse epigram, happy figure—were wholly subservient to the purpose in view, and were manifestly perceived never to be themselves the object, never to be introduced for their own sake. They were the sparks thrown off by the motion of the engine, not fireworks to amuse by their singularity or please by their beauty; all was for use, not ornament; all for work, nothing for display; the object always in view, the speaker never, either of himself or of the audience." Supplementary to Brougham's comments we have a letter written by Lord Dudley to a friend in 1819: "By the by, Plunkett has cut a great figure this year," he wrote; "his speech in answer to Mackintosh was among the most perfect replies I have ever heard. He assailed the fabric of his adversary, not by an irregular damaging fire that left parts of it standing, but by a complete, rapid systematic process of demolition, that did not leave one stone standing upon another."

While perfectly true that Plunkett never permitted his fancy to run wild the impression must not be left that he gave no heed to ornamentation. He possessed a lively imagination which he carefully subordinated to his judgment. That he never underrated the legitimate part that beauty of imagery plays in all first-class oratory may be properly assumed from the

fact that he prepared with infinite care many of his finest figures, using them as "rhetorical stepping stones," as he himself told Richard Lalor Sheil.

An illustration of his employment of figures is found in the following:

"In those days reform approached us in far different guise; it came as a felon, and we resisted; it now comes as a creditor; we admit the debt and only dispute on the instalments by which it shall be paid."

One of his most famous figures was employed in an argument to the court in a case where the documents conferring an original title on his client, having been lost, his case rested chiefly upon long and unquestioned possession of the property.

"Time," he said, "while with one hand he mows down the muniments of our titles, with the other metes out those portions of durations which render unnecessary the evidence he has swept away."

There are little gems of imagery scattered all through his speeches—unpretentious because so naturally employed. Thus, speaking of the English soldier he says, "He never would raise his sword to stab the liberties of Ireland, for he knows that the life blood of England must issue through the wound." Describing a speech of Pitt with "a couple of powdered lacqueys of epithets waiting upon every substantive;" thus referring to the action of Castlereagh in Ireland after the pronouncement of Pitt he said, "after the great leviathan has concluded his tumblings, a young whale puts up his nostrils, and spurts his blubber on this

country;" thus his description of the house of commons because of its vacillation on the question of emancipation as "suffering with hot and cold fits;" thus his reference to Elizabeth's refusal to establish a system of espionage as a refusal "to make windows to look into the hearts of her subjects;" and thus his striking image in the enumeration of the immortals of English politics who had supported emancipation for the Catholics—"supported by these great names, and not encountered by one which has had sufficient buoyancy to float along the stream of time."

There have been few modern orators with a greater capacity for invective. One example of this power practised upon Castlereagh is especially worth noting. The most biting and hurtful feature is to be found in the last four words, in view of the fact that Lady Castlereagh, a woman of extraordinary beauty, who looked down from the gallery, was childless though married for several years:

"The example of the prime minister of England, inimitable in its vices, may deceive the noble lord. The minister of England has his faults. He abandoned in his later years the principle of reform, by professing which he had attained the early confidence of the people of England, and in the whole of his political conduct he has shown himself haughty and intractable; but it must be admitted that he is endowed by nature with a towering and transcendent intellect, and that the vastness of his resources keeps pace with the magnificence and unboundedness of his projects. I thank God that it is much more easy for him to transfer his apostacy and his insolence than his comprehension and his sagacity; and I feel the safety of my country in the wretched feebleness of her enemy. I can not fear that the constitu-

tion which has been founded by the wisdom of the ages and cemented by the blood of patriots and heroes is to be smitten to its center by such a green and sapless twig as this."

Another illustration of his powers of denunciation, his description of the tour of Lord Cornwallis in search of union signatures, may also be used as indicating that rapidity of style of which Fox alone is a rival:

"It is painful to dwell upon that disgraceful expedition. No place too obscure to be visited, no rank too low to be courted, no threat too vile to be employed; the counties not sought to be legally convened by their sheriffs; no attempt to collect the unbiased support of the intelligent and independent part of the community; public addresses sought for from petty villages, and private signatures smuggled from public counties—and how procured? By the influence of absentee landlords, not over the affections, but over the terrors of their tenantry. By griping agents and revenue officers. And after all this mummery had been exhausted; after the luster of royalty had been tarnished by this vulgar intercourse with the lowest of the rabble; after every spot had been selected where a paltry address could be procured, and every place avoided where a manly sentiment could be encountered; after abusing the names of the dead and forging the signatures of the living; after polling the inhabitants of the jail, and calling out against parliament the suffrages of those who did not sign them until they had got their protection in their pockets; after employing the revenue officer to threaten the publican that he should be marked as a victim, and the agent to terrify the shivering tenant that his turf-bog would be withheld; after employing your military commanders, the uncontrolled arbiters of life and death, to hunt the rabble against the constituted authorities; after squeezing the lowest dregs

of a population of near five millions you obtained about five thousand signatures, three-fourths of whom affixed their names in surprise, terror or total ignorance of the subject; and after all this canvass of the people, and after all this corruption wasted on the parliament, and after all your boasting that you must carry the measure by a triumphant majority, you do not dare to announce the subject in the speech from the throne."

While not entirely devoid of pathos and humor a study of his speeches fails to disclose any partiality for the use of either. His few humorous passages are a trifle clumsy and his most pathetic passages on the death of Grattan were never completed because of the violence of his emotions. He was incapable of the artistry of tears.

Lord Plunkett was unfortunate in the subjects treated in his speeches. Had he had the opportunity to treat of such subjects as occupied the genius of Edmund Burke, the mastery of his treatment and the chaste character of his eloquence would have given to his orations a permanent value they do not now possess. His majestic eloquence expended in behalf of emancipation, while novel at the time of its delivery, now, in this more liberal and better day, seems the expression of indisputable and universally conceded truths—much ado about nothing. Consequently these speeches are only possessed of a certain historical value. They are torches illuminating the dark day that has passed from the calendar. His two striking speeches against the union will be read long after those on emancipation, or as long as lovers of liberty find pleasure in lingering over the history of the battles that have been fought for its preservation.

V

ROBERT EMMET

The Insurrection of 1803

THERE was a dearth of political activity in Ireland from the destruction of the Irish parliament, in 1800, until about 1816, when O'Connell began to organize the people for the emancipation battle. During the greater part of this period the acknowledged leaders of Ireland were fighting the battles of their country, as best they could, within the walls of Saint Stephens, across the channel. This period is immortal in Irish history however because of one thrilling episode—the insurrection of Robert Emmet. The numerous children of Erin who have paid the penalty of their love of country upon the scaffold have reached the heart of the Irish race to an even greater degree than the splendid characters who have successfully fought her battles and attained results, and died, after the fashion of gentlemen, in their beds. Emmet accomplished less perhaps than any other of the idols of Ireland. His mistakes were more glaring, his weaknesses more appalling, and possibly the results of his ill-timed insurrection were more disastrous to the fortunes of his country. The secret of the universal love, which hallows him, lies in the fact that he had scarcely attained manhood when he made

the vicarious sacrifice, and that his heart was right. And so he is tenderly called "the child of the heart of Erin." In thousands of cottages throughout the world, one of the treasured possessions is a crude green print of a boyish figure making his appeal "to time and to eternity and not to men." One thing he did in the few days allotted to him—he taught the sons of Ireland how to die, and by his dramatic appeal to the imagination of mankind, centered the world's attention on the cause of his unhappy country. The pathetic and inspiring story of his death will never fade. The pen of Moore has so sweetly sung his requiem that the music lingers on and on. The genius of Irving still wrings from even cynics' eye the tears of compassion as they peruse the story of *The Broken Heart.* He has no monument—but he needs none. Even the spot where he lies buried is enveloped in mystery—it is enough to know that he lies in Irish ground. Only one of his speeches has been preserved—but every Irish mother teaches it to her children. Thus, when others who did more have been forgotten or are but vaguely remembered, the pulse of every son and daughter of the green isle of romance and tragedy will quicken at the mention of the name of Robert Emmet.

I

The story of Emmet's life and genius is shrouded in more of mystery than that of the other popular heroes and orators of Ireland. His biographers have written tenderly and lovingly of his brief career, but even the best of these have left us in the dark regarding some of the most important periods of his life.

With the exception of the fragmentary recollections of Tom Moore, all that has been known of his life was incorporated many years ago in the rather pretentious biography of Doctor Madden. The subsequent *Memoirs* of the Emmet family by Doctor Emmet have thrown no additional light of a positive nature upon the hidden years. The sketch of the Countess D'Haussonville is but a touching tribute predicated upon Madden's story.

He was born of heroic stock. His father, an eminent physician, practised in the south of Ireland during the greater part of his life, but finally settled in Dublin where Robert, his seventeenth child, was born, on March fourth, 1778. He was as fortunate in his home environment as in his birth. The father was a man of superior attainments. His character was in keeping with his education. Beginning his Dublin career as a governmental placeman, holding the position of state physician, and practising in the families of the coterie of the Castle, he finally enrolled himself with the patriot party, and, with a characteristic consistency, relinquished his lucrative positions in the state. The erstwhile Tory developed into one of the most uncompromising of patriots, and it was at his knee that his youngest child was impregnated with that passionate love of Ireland which was to lead to his death upon the scaffold.

Of the period which intervened between the cradle and the college we have but meager information. He was first sent to the school of a Mr. Oswald which was noted for its superior mathematical training, and then transferred to the celebrated school of Samuel Whyte, where Richard B. Sheridan, Thomas Moore and other

famous Irishmen received their preliminary education. He later attended the school of the Reverend Mr. Lewis in Camden Street. The rapidity of his progress appears in the fact that in his fifteenth year he was enrolled as a student at Trinity College.

While few colleges have produced so many men of extraordinary brilliancy, it seems from contemporary testimony that none other of the students of Trinity has ever made such a profound impression by the brilliancy of their mentality as did Emmet. Though highly imaginative and fond of poetry he was surpassingly strong in mathematics and positively brilliant in chemistry. It was not his superiority in these studies however that caused him to stand out so preeminently among his fellows. Very early in his college career he gave evidence of that inspiring eloquence which was destined to enliven the debating societies of the college and to call down upon his head the disapproving frown of the Castle. The country at this time was in a ferment of insurrection. The flagrant wrongs of Ireland were calling loudly for redress, and surface indications justified the fear that the patriots were preparing to make their appeal to the sword. The governmental functionaries realized that a crisis was approaching, and were sleeping on their arms. The agitation throughout the country gave a nervous energy to the watchfulness of the authorities. It was reserved for the youthful Emmet to carry the defiant attitude of the nationalists into the sacred conservative precincts of the college and, through the magnetic brilliancy of his eloquence, to arouse the fighting instincts of the students.

This was made possible through debating societies

with which Emmet immediately affiliated. The authorities had strictly forbidden the discussion of contemporary politics. With rare ingenuity Emmet found a way around this prohibition. Through analogy and insinuation he preached the doctrine of resistance to tyranny, preached it so persistently and effectively that even conservative Trinity became permeated with it. The fame of the orator spread among the people of the city, and finally called for the consideration of the Castle. At this time there was little in Emmet's appearance to suggest the agitator. In the classroom and on the campus his modesty of demeanor, his apparent lack of ambition, his inanimate brow and rather ordinary physical aspect discouraged the idea that he was at all dangerous. It was when he spoke that he underwent a transformation. His eyes flashed, his entire countenance was suddenly and strangely illuminated, his physical mediocrity miraculously took on the imposing features of conscious power, his voice rang with an emotion that quickly communicated to his hearers, and he seemed for the moment the very personification of Ireland—glowing at the recollection of her departed glories, burning in the contemplation of her wrongs. No one who heard him at Trinity ever forgot the effect of his eloquence. A quarter of a century after his death the Reverend Archibald Douglas, then one of the most polished pulpit orators of Dublin, said that "so gifted a creature does not appear in a thousand years." And after having become familiar with the classic orators who held forth at Westminster, and heard all the most eloquent men of his time, Tom Moore, in looking back upon the speeches of the martyr, declared that he had never heard loftier or purer

Robert Emmet
From Commerford's Portrait

eloquence "as well from its own exciting power as from the susceptibility with which his audience caught up every allusion to passing events."

Unfortunately none of these speeches in their entirety has come down to us and we are compelled to accept the judgment of the orator's contemporaries. His method of injecting politics into the discussions of the students was adroit. On one occasion the question submitted was as to whether complete freedom of discussion is essential to the well-being of a good and virtuous government. There was dynamite in the very question, especially at a time when editors who dared disturb the complacency of the Castle by the publication of unwelcome truths were being driven to bankruptcy and thrown into prison. Only a little while before Curran had vainly sought to save Rowan and Finnerty from the vengeance of the state. In advocating the affirmative in this debate, Emmet discoursed eloquently of ancient tyrannies, cleverly mirroring local conditions in his pictures of the infamies of the past, and then, in an impetuous burst of defiance, declaring it the duty of the state to permit the freest discussions, and significantly closing with the suggestion that where such freedom was curtailed it "was up to the people to draw practical conclusions from the tyranny of the government and to act upon their resolves."

We have another striking instance of his methods drawn from the memories of Tom Moore. The society had under discussion the question as to the relative effect of a democracy and an aristocracy in advancing the causes of science and education, and Emmet, with more than his customary brilliancy ardently espoused the cause of the democracy. On

this occasion he spoke like one inspired, with a rapidity of utterance, a wealth of illustration, and a passionate intensity that entranced his fellow students, among whom was the poet. Not content with recounting the encouragement held forth to literature by the republics of antiquity, he audaciously took the new republic of France as an illustration. This, within itself, was, at that time, scarcely less than treason. Pitt was preparing to grapple with the people across the channel, and all the conservative forces of England were enlisted in the war against what was termed the irreligious rabble of Paris. Even Burke had taken up his pen to voice his horror at the execution of the queen. The effect was therefore magical when the orator, after referring to the act of Cæsar in carrying with him across the river his commentaries and his sword, reached a dramatic climax in the startling exclamation:

"Thus France at this time swims through a sea of blood; but while in one hand she wields the sword against her aggressors, with the other she upholds the interest of literature, uncontaminated by the bloody tide through which she struggles."

On another occasion the club had under discussion the question whether a soldier is always obliged to obey the commands of his officer. This gave Emmet the opportunity to preach insubordination, a crime at that time unspeakable. He declared implicit obedience "degrading to human nature," and closed by drawing a vivid word picture of a soldier who at the behest of his superiors, had fallen in the ranks of the army of the oppressor rushing into the presence of his Maker with the pitiful exclamation, "Oh God, I know not why I have done this."

One more quotation will suffice as indicating the general trend of the college orations that subjected a mere boy to the espionage of a powerful government. In one of his speeches Emmet set forth the doctrine that had already become the dominating thought of his life:

"When a people advancing rapidly in civilization and the knowledge of their rights look back after a long lapse of time and perceive how far the spirit of their government has lagged behind them, what then, I ask, is to be done by them in such a case? What, but to pull the government up to the people?"

It was inevitable that such doctrine, advanced with such marvelous eloquence and effect, should make a profound impression outside the college and elicit the condemnatory frown of the authorities. The faculty was not in sympathy with the rebellious spirit of the student, and finally the plan was devised of sending a much older man of great ability into the debating society to answer Emmet. This was the highest tribute that the government could pay. No, not the highest, but that also was reserved for him. Late in the year 1797 the Fellows of the college, acting no doubt upon a suggestion from the Castle, determined to drive from the institution all the students responsible for the "dissemination of treasonable doctrines." In April of the following year came the infamous "visitation" to the university. The Earl of Clare, whose repulsive picture has been handed down to posterity in the famous characterization of Curran, very properly presided over the proceedings. Emmet was ordered to appear before the committee and divulge the names of all the

students suspected of being United Irishmen. Emmet an informer! The idea was grotesque. Nor was it expected that he would thus degrade himself. It was the intention to base his expulsion on his anticipated refusal. But again the committee had failed to gage its man. The young orator after a consultation with his father sent a letter of refusal to appear in which he denounced the committee with the utmost scorn for attempting to degrade the students of Trinity to the repulsive level of informers and demanded that his name be stricken from the roll of students. Thus his career in college was not more luminous than his manner of leaving it.

The expulsion of Emmet only made a stronger appeal to the imaginations of the students who were with few exceptions devoted to him. We have it from Charles Phillips, the orator, that "every one loved, every one respected him, and his fate made a profound impression on the university." His expulsion came too late—he had already sown the seed and it fell on fertile ground.

It was early in the year of his expulsion that he espoused the principles of the United Irishmen, although the records fail to disclose that he ever became an active member of the organization. Doubtless he fed his rebellious mind while in college on the seditious philosophy heard at the meetings in his brother's house. No doubt he had reached the conclusion that only through force could the wrongs of his people be righted. This may be gathered from an incident in which Moore, the poet, figured while both were students at Trinity. An unsigned letter had appeared in the press denouncing the lord chancellor with a ferocity

that seemed almost an invitation to assassination. Its publication created a profound impression. It was the custom in those days for Emmet and Moore to take long strolls out into the country, and on one of these rambles the poet confided to his friend that he had written the letter. With ineffable gentleness, the orator expressed his pleasure at the patriotic sentiments, but coupled it with a regret that its publication had called attention to the political tendencies of the university just when the work of organization was favorably progressing. The poet assumed from this that Emmet had even then decided that the time for talk had passed and that the time to act had come. On another occasion when Moore was at the pianoforte playing *Let Erin Remember the Days of Old,* Emmet sprang to his feet and with flashing eyes, passionately exclaimed: "Oh, that I were at the head of twenty thousand men marching to that air."

Thus at twenty, Robert Emmet was a revolutionist. His mind and heart had been centered on his country. The heroes who had died for her and slept in unconsecrated ground, instead of deterring him by the horror of their death and burial, inspired him with the spirit of emulation. His imaginative mind had found employment in the writing of poetry during his college days, and while none of his poems is worthy of his fame, one, written on Arbor Hill, the site of a number of executions for treason, commands a melancholy interest in view of the fate of its author:

"Unconsecrated is this ground,
Unblessed by holy hands—
No bell here tolls its solemn sound
No monument here stands.

But here the patriot's tears are shed
The poor man's blessing given—
These consecrate the virtuous dead,
These waft their fame to heaven."

Such was the Robert Emmet of '98—before he had attained his majority. A mere boy—and yet the brilliancy of his eloquence had converted a conservative university into a hot bed of sedition, commanded the admiration of the metropolis, and sent a tremor through the occupants of the Castle. A mere boy—and yet he had sat in the council of the United Irishmen as they planned the fight for the freedom of Ireland. A mere boy—and yet his dreams of leading an awakened people to the attainment of their liberty by the light of a victor's sword. A mere boy—and yet so old that the government issued a warrant for his arrest, and drove him in exile from the land of his nativity.

II

But was he of necessity an exile? The revolution of '98 with its resultant effects upon the family fortunes of the Emmets, coupled with the fact that a warrant had been issued for the arrest of Robert, justifies the assumption that his prolonged absence from Ireland was not entirely of his own volition. The failure of the government to execute the warrant when it had the youthful suspect within its power is one of the mysteries that has not been solved. After the arrest of Robert's insurrectionary brother and his incarceration at Fort George we see Robert journeying thither in the company of his sister-in-law; and after having

seen and conferred with his brother we find him going directly to the continent where his three years' sojourn will perhaps always be a mystery. We are assured that he spent the summer of 1800 in Switzerland, and that he later traveled through southern France and a short distance across the Spanish border, and ultimately settled in Paris. It is scarcely less than marvelous that so little has been disclosed of his life in the French capital. He must have written many letters to his family and friends, but only a few of these, addressed to the Marquis de Fontenay in Ireland, have been rescued from oblivion.

It is positively known that his original purpose in lingering in Paris was to await the liberation of his brother with whom he had practically determined to emigrate to the United States. Later developments in Ireland however altered his plans—and yet he remained in Paris. There have been many explanations offered for his continued presence there. It has been suggested that he was acquainted with the plans and purposes of the members of the United Irishmen who had escaped detection and arrest and that his position in France was in the nature of an unofficial plenipotentiary through whom the rebellious organization communicated with Napoleon as to the feasibility of an invasion of Ireland. We know positively that he did succeed in getting an audience with Napoleon, that he was afterward in conference with Talleyrand on several occasions, and that he was not favorably impressed with either. He doubted the disposition of either the dictator or his diplomatic adviser to serve the Irish in the way desired, although he was persuaded that Talleyrand was not adverse to the establishment of

an independent republic in Ireland. The only solace that he appears to have found in his conferences with the French chiefs was the assurance that an early and lasting peace between France and England did not enter into the plans of Napoleon.

Meanwhile he devoted his time to a careful study of military science, and numerous books on the subject, bearing his marginal notes, are still extant. He doubtless clung to the hope that the evolution of events would one day place him at the head of the twenty thousand men suggested by Moore's playing of the inspiring Irish ballad. There is nothing authentic to justify the conclusion that anything more serious than his studies occupied his time during his residence in Paris. However it was inevitable that something of romance should have been woven out of the mystery that closed in about him, and the story has been told that he devoted a portion of his time to traveling about in various disguises in an effort to organize the Irish exiles at that time living in France.

The prospects for an immediate resuscitation of the insurrectionary movement in Ireland was exceedingly dark during the greater part of Emmet's residence in France. The authorities of Dublin Castle were ruling with an iron hand. The island was known to be honeycombed with spies and no man knew his brother. The procrastination and coldness of Napoleon held forth no promise of exterior assistance. The patriot's movement in Ireland lay broken and bleeding and seemingly doomed to die. It is this condition which makes all the more incomprehensible the sudden feverish anxiety of Emmet to return to his native isle and place himself at the head of a new rebellion.

While the whole truth will probably never be disclosed there is every reason for asserting that some time during the latter part of his sojourn in Paris he was assured by unknown emissaries that Ireland was ripe for an uprising. The idea of the insurrection of 1803 was not born in the brain of Emmet, but was planted there by persons who have never been exposed. He was undoubtedly trapped to his death. In seeking for a motive one has a right to take into consideration the conditions of the times as they related to Ireland's traditional foe across the channel. The ports of England were all but closed by Napoleon, whose fleets had very nearly annihilated the commerce of his island enemy, and the masses of the people, suffering in pride and purse, were in that restless, nervous, irritable condition that governments find dangerous. The traditional specific for such domestic ills has always been a counteracting excitement. It was manifestly important to Pitt that something should be done to divert attention from the miserable fiasco that he had made of his war on France. It was just at this time that messengers were despatched to Paris carrying the word to Emmet that seventeen counties in Ireland were prepared to rise in insurrection the moment a successful attempt should be made in Dublin.

Who sent these men to Emmet?

Regarding this phase of the Emmet insurrection we are not left wholly without grounds at least upon which to base a conjecture. Many years after the young martyr had been in his unknown grave Doctor Emmet, who was working upon his *Memoirs* of the Emmet family, was granted permission to look over some state papers of the period of 1798 to 1804 that

were said to be among the London records. Upon investigation it was found that the papers desired had been transferred to Dublin to be investigated and properly classified. At that time Sir Bernard Burke, Ulster king-at-arms, was in charge of these papers at Dublin Castle and the request of Doctor Emmet for permission to peruse them was denied, with the explanation that their dangerous nature had been called to the attention of the Duke of Marlborough, who had ordered them sealed, placed in a separate box and protected from the scrutiny of the world. This sealed box, with the order of the duke, was shown to Doctor Emmet. Time went on, and a personal friendship sprang up between Burke and Emmet, and Burke gave his friend an intimation of the character of the hidden papers. Among them were letters that were exchanged between the government at Dublin and the ministry of Pitt during the period immediately preceding the union, in which the infamies of the methods resorted to were shown to have been far worse than was imagined.

The most startling revelations, however, related to the insurrection of 1803. Among the papers was a letter, which had been read by Burke, from William Pitt to Marsden, secretary in Ireland, instructing him to foment another insurrection and directing him to send messengers to Paris to approach Robert Emmet. Had such a project been possible to the brain of Pitt, the selection of Emmet, whose revolutionary tendencies were notoriously pronounced, whose enthusiastic credulity was well known, and who was even then under an indictment, would have been natural. These papers showed that governmental agents were sent to

Paris with misinformation; that upon Emmet's return the police facilitated his plans in every way, and that the government was thoroughly cognizant of every step he took from the moment of his arrival until the fateful hour. It is now a matter of history that Lord Hardwick, who was at the head of the Irish government, knew absolutely nothing about the proposed insurrection until the very evening of the rising, while Marsden and McWickham, the chief secretary, had long been in full possession of information regarding it. The story related by Doctor Emmet and partly corroborated by history justifies the conclusion that Emmet was the victim of a Machiavellian plot, as dastardly as was ever incubated in the mind of a medieval despot. A few years after Doctor Emmet's conversation with Burke, and after the Whigs came into power, another effort was made to reach the papers—but they were gone!

Of all this, however, Emmet was in blissful ignorance. His last days in France were the most joyous of his existence. He foresaw, as he thought, the dawning day of retribution for Ireland. He saw himself as he had seen himself in dreams, at the head of his twenty thousand men, marching to victory to the tune of *Let Erin Remember the Days of Old.* He saw the fruits of victory bursting from the soil that had been fertilized by the blood of the martyrs. A few days previous to his return home, while dining with Lord Cloncurry and discussing the wrongs of his country, his features glowed with enthusiasm and excitement, while the perspiration burst through the pores and ran down his forehead. And all the while the saturnine smile of statesmen, sailing under the col-

ors of Christianity, was fixed upon him, while cynic hands were engaged in the preparation of the grave to which was doomed the boy patriot and all his dreams. Confident, enthusiastic and happy, Emmet turned toward home.

III

On reaching his native isle Emmet hastened to Casino, the beautiful country home of his father, and there he remained quietly for a short while. He is described as possessing handsome features and a gentlemanly appearance. He was about five feet eight inches in height, slight in person, though capable of great physical exertion and much endurance. His high broad forehead and small, bright and expressive eyes gave earnest of his mentality, the most striking of his features being his nose, which was remarkably thin and straight. At this time there was nothing in his manner to set him off from the crowd aside from the glow which emanated from him in moments of patriotic excitation.

He soon found himself surrounded by seeming sympathizers, who may be divided into three classes: the spies of the government, the fashionable young men about town who saw in his enthusiasm and credulity an opportunity to clothe and feed themselves, and the sincere followers of the revolutionary idea.

He converted his own fortune into money, which was translated into pikes, guns and ammunition. In this last, at the critical hour, he was pitifully deficient. He established his depots, where he stored the munitions of war, and consulted with his emissaries.

Buoyed up by his hopes, he was not wholly blind to the difficulties that beset his path. About this time he wrote:

"I have but little time to look at the thousand difficulties that lie between me and the completion of my wishes. That those difficulties will likewise disappear I have ardent, and, I trust, rational hopes; but if it is not to be the case, I thank God for having gifted me with a sanguine disposition. To that disposition I run from reflection; and if my hopes are without foundation—if a precipice is opening under my feet from which duty will not suffer me to turn back, I am grateful to that sanguine disposition which leads me to the brink and throws me down, while my eyes are still raised to the visions of happiness that my fancy formed in the air."

It was Emmet's plan to hold off the uprising until August on the theory that England would at that time be attacked on her own shores and would be rendered helpless in Ireland. The cruel fate that pursued his every movement intervened. An accidental explosion at one of his depots aroused the public curiosity and impelled him to advance the day of action. Plans were laid for July twenty-third.

These plans contemplated the support of three hundred men from Wexford, four hundred from Kildare, two hundred from Wicklow—all of whom were veterans in insurrectionary war. In addition to these he counted upon the cooperation of at least three thousand in Dublin. He expected no less than two thousand men to assemble at Costigan's Mills—the rallying point. Then came the succession of heart-breaking disappointments. The financial aid promised failed of materialization. The fashionable young men about

town who had fattened on his credulous bounty slunk away, laughing in their sleeves. The men he sent out to buy guns kept the money and never returned. The Wicklow men failed to appear because of their officers. The men from Kildare, upon whom he particularly depended, came into Dublin the night before and left again because of a traitorous lie to the effect that the rising had been postponed. Owing to the confusion and the crowded condition of the main depot the fuses for the grenades, which had been laid aside, could not be found. Through an accident the slow matches that had been prepared were mixed with those that were not, and thus the labor went for naught. Little wonder that he cried out in the agony of his soul: "Had I had another week—had I had one thousand pounds —had I had a thousand men, I would have feared nothing."

At the appointed hour but eighty men were on hand. Postponement was no longer a matter of policy, but necessity. But here again fate—or was it treachery? —intervened. One of his men rushed excitedly into the depot shouting: "The soldiers are coming down upon us—we are lost." Postponement, a moment before a necessity, was no longer a possibility.

The hour had come!

Calm, smiling confidently, Emmet hurriedly put on his green and gold uniform, ordered the distribution of arms, sent up a rocket to notify the people that the time had come for the attack upon the Castle, and at the head of eighty men he sallied forth, waving his sword and shouting: "Come on, boys, we'll take the Castle." A little way and the eighty had dwindled to eighteen. Then the army was augmented—it gath-

ered the denizens of the underworld, ever ready for an excuse to pillage and murder—it took unto itself the canaille from the drinking places. Down the street it moved, an undisciplined mass of impossible material. The gallant boy in his pathetic uniform of green and gold attempted vainly to bring order out of chaos. But alas! intoxication knows no commander. The army became a mob. The spirit of patriotism gave way to that of pillage—and the spirit of murder came to the surface. On marched Emmet, waving his sword —far in the lead—on toward the Castle.

An old man, one of the noblest in Ireland, was pounced upon by the rabble, dragged from his carriage, pierced with pikes — and Lord Kilwarden's blood blotted the story of the insurrection.

The valiant boy heard the frightful news and paused, disheartened. Hurrying back, he personally conducted the murdered peer's woman companion to a place of safety, and in the contemplation of the havoc wrought and the murderous mass of drunken men he read the failure of his dream. A word of exhortation to the mob, a plea that the crowd disband, and with a heavy heart Robert Emmet, with a few of his friends, turned and rode toward the green hills of Wicklow.

And over the tragedy, which embraced the broken heart of Emmet, hovered the sinister smile of the Castle.

IV

He reached the fragrant hills of Wicklow in safety —and just beyond spread the welcoming sea. No one

knew better the penalty of his capture, and yet he steadfastly turned a deaf ear to the importunities of his friends to avail himself of the opportunities to escape beyond the jurisdiction of Great Britain. Just below him, in a little port within easy access, a fishing smack, under full sail, was anchored, and he was urged to save himself, but he refused to move. A few days after the fateful uprising Anne Devlin—of beautiful memory—was despatched to the retreat of the outlaws with letters for Emmet. She found him seated in an unconcerned manner upon the hillside, still wearing his uniform of gold and green. To her he confided the secret of his love for Sarah Curran, and his determination never to leave Ireland without at least having the opportunity to see her for the last time. With this in view he accompanied Anne on her return toward Dublin, leaving her just before reaching the fashionable suburb of the capital in which the Currans lived.

The circumstances under which these two lovers first met are not positively known. The most reasonable story is to the effect that the brother of Sarah, who was a college mate, brought them together at The Priory. Certain it is that Emmet became a frequent visitor at the beautiful suburban place of the famous advocate, who was quick to comprehend his intellectual brilliancy. Not until within a comparatively short time before the insurrection did Curran become aware of anything unusual in the frequency of Emmet's visits. Until the very last he assumed that the youth was merely one of his own admirers. The first intimation Curran had of the sentimental attachment between his daughter and the promising youth from

Trinity came in the discovery of their love-letters by the authorities after his arrest.

To write of Sarah Curran in a cold chronological manner is impossible. Her ardent and lasting devotion to her lover—a devotion which drove her penniless from beneath her father's roof, and deified the memory of the martyr—deserves to take its place along with the classic passions of the centuries. She had inherited something of her father's genius, much of his temperament including his spirit and tendency to melancholy. We have a picture of her in her twelfth year, pensive, subdued, and with an intellectual development beyond her years. Hers had been a heritage of sorrow. Under a great tree on the lawn of The Priory was the grave of a younger sister for whom she had entertained a deep affection. About this time occurred the tragedy which darkened and embittered her father's life—the elopement of her mother, to whom she was passionately attached. The great orator, who retained to the end a public geniality, became morose in the privacy of his home, more and more detached in sympathy from his family.

It was about this time that she met Robert Emmet. She has been described as slight in figure and not tall, with the dark complexion and the large, dark eloquent eyes of her father, and with a look "the mildest, the softest and the sweetest you ever saw." We know from various sources that she had a beautiful singing voice. The few letters that have been preserved indicate a brilliant mind. And that she had a heart that beat in ardent sympathy with the aspirations of the patriots of Ireland is shown by the encouragement she gave her lover.

Safe for the time in Wicklow hills, Emmet wrote to Sarah, urging her to join him and share his fortunes in the land beyond the sea. The fact that she refused undoubtedly resulted in his apprehension and execution, and it was a realization of this which haunted her to her grave. Instead, she wrote him tenderly of her duty to her father and her father's fame, and plead with him to seek his own safety in flight across the waters. At the very time that Emmet was trudging back from the Wicklow hills, under cover of the night, she was joyous in the assurance that he had reached the sea. She had not fathomed the depth of his devotion. Her letter only drew him back within the danger zone, and within a few days after the insurrection Emmet was living in the house at Harold's Cross, situated between Dublin and The Priory. There he hoped to intercept Sarah on her way to and from the city. But he was doomed to failure. Impatient of his failure, he summoned his faithful Anne and despatched her with a message to The Priory—and thus Sarah Curran was brought to a realization of what she had done. We have it on the word of the messenger that when these letters were slipped into her hand "her face would change so you would not know her." These letters, the passionate confessions of two hearts, were destined to fall into the hands of the authorities—for the inevitable spy was on the trail of the patriot. Just who the wretched informer was the world will never know. Through the sensitive sympathy of the Castle he has been permitted to escape the deep damnation of his infamy. He received the price of his dastardly act

but was spared publicity. Thus Robert Emmet was apprehended and hurried to his doom.

In the gloom of his prison his thoughts were centered, not upon his fate, but upon the unhappy girl at The Priory. His prison letters to her never reached their destination.

"My love, Sarah," he wrote to her brother, "it was not thus I had hoped to requite your affection. I did hope to be a prop around which your affection might have clung, and which never would have been shaken; but a rude blast has snapped it, and it has fallen over a grave."

Maddened by the thought that she had unconsciously lured her lover to his death, horrified at the suspicion the discovery of her letters had centered upon her father, and cringing pitifully under the scornful reproach of her family, Sarah's mind suffered an eclipse. Thus was she spared the terrors of the closing scenes. And when she emerged from the mental darkness that had mercifully closed in upon her, Robert Emmet had made his appeal "to time and to eternity and not to man."

Her subsequent story has been touchingly told by Irving, in *The Broken Heart,* and Tom Moore has immortalized her ineffable sorrow in the exquisite lines, *She Is Far from the Land Where Her Young Hero Sleeps.* After a little while she gave her hand to a gallant soldier who was worthy of her, but only after having warned him that her heart was buried in the unconsecrated grave of her lover. Irving has given us a significant glimpse of her at a masquerade, where in the midst of the gaiety and frills she wandered

through the merry throng, insensible to their laughter, until at length she sat down on the steps of a platform and "began with the capriciousness of a sickly heart to warble a plaintive air." More touching still is the story of her visit to the studio of James Petrie, who had made a court-room sketch of Emmet. The little son of the artist was alone in the room when a lady entered, without observing him, and went over to the portrait. Lifting her veil, she stood a long while in unbroken silence, and then turning with an unsteady step, she passed to the opposite end of the room, where she pressed her head against the wall, while deep passionate sobs shook her slender form. A little while, and she, too, was gone. In the little graveyard at Newmarket she was buried and, like her lover, no monument marks the spot of her interment.

Robert Emmet and Sarah Curran—they share in a common immortality. In the history of Ireland, blood-stained and yet beautiful, they are the Romeo and Juliet of its romance and tragedy.

V

In the little court room in Dublin a strange and memorable drama was enacted on the nineteenth of September, 1803. The miserable wretches who had trapped the "son of the heart of Erin" designed to drop the curtain of oblivion upon the insurrectionary movement of Robert Emmet. The room was packed with the curious, and among them were many whose hearts beat in ardent sympathy with the defendant. There sat Lord Norbury, the dismal butcher of the crown, who was wont to charge against a patriot de-

fendant with all the savagery of a Jeffries, and beside him sat Mr. Baron George, and Mr. Baron Daly. It was a dramatic scene. The young defendant had only a little while before been a welcome guest in the most exclusive drawing-rooms of Dublin, and the metropolis was familiar with the marvelous eloquence of the Trinity student. The jury selected was typical of the times—a packed jury, a jury of blood-letters—a jury in perfect keeping with the dignity of the sycophant upon the bench. The attorneys for the defense had been assigned him, and among them, conspicuous by his absence, was the one majestic genius worthy of such a scene—John Philpot Curran. Deserted by his friends and compatriots, even one of the attorneys for the gallant boy in the dock turned out to be a traitor and a spy!

Mr. Standish O'Grady rose to open the indictment. The testimony for the prosecution was heard. The hour for the defense struck. Then rose one of the defendant's counsel with the announcement that no witnesses would be called for Emmet—and this on the direct orders of the defendant. More than that, no argument would be made.

The audacious determination of the boy in the dock startled the spectators, startled the court, and jury, and alarmed the special prosecutor—who sprang to his feet. What! Deprive Plunkett of an opportunity to curry favor with authority! Nay, Plunkett would speak. And Plunkett spoke. Spoke with the precision and brilliancy that gave him his celebrity, and with the bitterness, acrimony and brutality that gave him his office later on. Not content with his marshaling of the undisputed facts he conjured up the memory of

Emmet's father with which to upbraid him, and closed with the memorable curse.

It was now Lord Norbury's turn. He charged the jury with his accustomed rancor and brutality.

It was now the cue for the packed jury and it shouted "Guilty." The attorney-general asked for the judgment of the court. It was now far into the night. The faint glow of the lamps threw a sepulchral gloom over the court room. The prisoner sat in his place unmoved, calm, apparently cold, gazing with curiosity first upon Plunkett, the apostate, and then upon Norbury, the butcher. The attorney for Emmet rose and requested that judgment be reserved for the morrow.

"It is impossible to comply with the request," responded O'Grady. Indeed, the attorney-general deserved credit for the moderation of his reply to a request that must have seemed ludicrous to Norbury. Postpone judgment until the morrow? And only ten o'clock now? Banish the thought—that would delay the decapitation of the prisoner until the day following!

The drama was hastening to the curtain. The words of the clerk of the court were heard in the awed court room.

"What have you therefore to say why judgment of death and execution should not be awarded against you according to law?"

With flashing eye Robert Emmet rose and stepped forward in the dock in front of the bench.

"My lords," he began, in a clear steady tone, "as to why judgment of death and execution should not be passed upon me I have nothing to say; but as to why

my character should not be relieved from the imputations and calumnies thrown out against it I have much to say."

Then followed the most remarkable speech that ever reverberated through a court room. It echoed through Ireland—it was destined to become as immortal as the spirit of liberty. It lifted Robert Emmet from the unconsecrated dust in which they laid him into the Pantheon of glory.

The majestic roll of defiant eloquence caused an uneasy shuffling among the government functionaries, not accustomed to hearing the brutal truth thundered in their very ears in the very sanctuary of despotism. Walking rapidly about in the dock Emmet was proceeding:

"I wish that my memory and my name may animate those who survive me, while I look down with complacency upon the destruction of that perfidious government which upholds its domination by the blasphemy of the Most High—which displays its power over man as over the beasts of the forest—which sets man upon his brother, and lifts his hand in the name of God against the throat of his fellow who believes or doubts a little more or a little less than the government standard—a government which is steeled to barbarity by the cries of the orphans and the tears of the widows that it has made."

At this Norbury could no longer restrain his innate brutality. He broke in upon the speaker with a denunciation of the "mean and wicked enthusiasts" who felt the patriotic passion that was pouring in immortal eloquence from the lips of the doomed boy. Unruffled and undisturbed by the interruption, Emmet went

on. There was no contrition in the words he uttered —naught but exaltation.

"Yes, my lords," he said with a smile, "a man who does not wish to have his epitaph written until his country is liberated will not leave a weapon in the power of envy; nor a pretense to impeach the probity which he means to preserve even in the grave to which tyranny consigns him."

Again Norbury cringed at the mention of tyranny, and another attempt was made to interrupt the flow of eloquence that could not but leave a profound impression upon posterity. Paying no heed to the interruption Emmet proceeded:

"What I have spoken was not intended for your lordship, whose position I commiserate rather than envy—my expressions were for my countrymen; if there is a true Irishman present, let my last words cheer him in the hour of his affliction—"

Beside himself with impotent rage Norbury again broke in with the angry assertion that he did not sit there to hear treason uttered.

"I have always understood it to be the duty of a judge when a prisoner has been convicted," said Emmet reproachfully, "to pronounce the sentence of the law; I have also understood that judges sometimes think it their duty to hear with patience and speak with humanity."

The "butcher of the crown," now too furious for utterance, sank back in his chair while the orator continued with a denunciation of the government of Ireland which was destined to echo for a century in the

cottages of the Irish exiles throughout the world. He walked rapidly in front of the railing before the bench and looked Norbury in the eye, and then retired as though "his body as well as his mind was swelling beyond the measure of his chains." With his left hand outstretched he struck the palm time and again with the two forefingers of his right hand to add emphasis to his rebuke.

"As men, my lord, we must appear at the great day at one common tribunal, and it will then remain for the searcher of all hearts to show a collective universe who was engaged in the most virtuous actions, or actuated by the purest motives—my country's oppressors, or—"

Pricked beyond endurance with the prodding of the orator, Norbury again broke in with the brutal demand that the doomed man cease. With flashing eyes and a scornful curl of the lip Emmet suggested that the form of the law that prescribed that he be asked why sentence should not be pronounced also prescribed an answer.

"This no doubt may be dispensed with," he said, "and so might the whole ceremony of the trial, since sentence has already been pronounced at the Castle, before your jury was empaneled; your lordships are but the priests of the oracle, and I submit; but I insist on the whole form."

Thus rebuked by one who knew his rights and proposed to maintain them in the face of power, Norbury impatiently demanded that the orator proceed. For a while he was unmolested as he entered his indignant

denial of the charges made relative to his attitude toward French intervention.

"France," he exclaimed, "even as an enemy, could not be more implacable than the enemy already in the bosom of the country."

Again Norbury burst forth with a demand that the prisoner cease with his treasonable utterances, only to receive upon his own head a bitter denunciation for his pains. Unchecked in his course, Emmet went on with his excoriation only to be interrupted time and again.

"But you, too," he charged, "if it were possible to collect all the innocent blood that you have shed in your unhallowed ministry in one great reservoir, your lordship might swim in it."

Hopeless now of throwing Emmet into confusion by his brutal interruptions, and anxious for him to close, Norbury sank back in his chair disgusted. Emmet went on. The lamp in the room began to flicker, and, with his eyes upon it, the gallant youth found the inspiration for his peroration—a peroration more famous perhaps than any that ever before or since has fallen from the lips of man.

"My lords, you are impatient for the sacrifice—the blood which you seek is not congealed by the artificial terrors which surround your victim; it circulates warm and unruffled through the channels which God created for noble purposes, but which you are bent to destroy, for purposes so grievous that they cry to heaven. Be yet patient. I have but a few words more to say. I

am going to my cold and silent grave; my lamp of life is nearly extinguished; my race is run; the grave opens to receive me and I sink into its bosom. I have but one request to ask on my departure from this world—it is the charity of its silence. Let no man write my epitaph: for, as no man who knows my motives dares now vindicate them, let not prejudice or ignorance asperse them. Let them and me repose in obscurity and peace, and my tomb remain uninscribed until other times and other men can do justice to my character; when my country takes her place among the nations of the earth, then, and not until then, let my epitaph be written."

As he sat down the flickering lamp went out!

It was now almost eleven o'clock, and Norbury zealously pronounced the sentence of death. A woman, unknown to the authorities, hurried forward and pressed a sprig of lavender into the doomed man's hands. He was pounced upon by officers and the sprig was torn from him. Thus, insulted even on the brink of the grave, he was hurried from the court room, in which Pitt had consummated another of his designs against the liberty of man, and consigned to prison to await the morrow.

But the speech was not forgotten. Torn from contact with the world and helpless to defend himself, the government, on the following day, hastened to issue its own version of the speech, a version intended to alienate from the Irish patriots the friendship of the French.

It was a dismal procession that moved through the streets of Dublin to the place of execution. The doomed man was placed in a closed carriage. As he was driven slowly to his death, accompanied by a strong guard of infantry and cavalry, the spectators in

the streets stood in melancholy silence. Occasionally the martyr caught the eye of a friend and smiled his farewell. In his hand he carried a last message to Sarah Curran. He eagerly scanned the crowd for a sympathetic messenger. At length he beheld a compassionate countenance, and at a sign from Emmet the friend rushed forward. The message was dropped from the window of the carriage, and the man caught it from the pavement. He was immediately seized and the last word of the doomed man to the woman that he loved was taken from him, and after being scanned by scoffing eyes, was destroyed. The procession moved on. At length the carriage stopped at the foot of the scaffold. Emmet firmly ascended the platform. No sign of fear was betrayed in his countenance. Turning to the crowd, his clear, strong, silvery voice was raised in a few brief words of farewell. The work of death was quickly done. The head was immediately struck from the body. The hangman, who had trembled at his work, grasped it brutishly by the hair, and parading along the front of the gallows he shouted:

"This is the head of a traitor, Robert Emmet."

And thus, quite properly, they closed the dismal tragedy with a lying epilogue.

VI

DANIEL O'CONNELL

The Fight for Catholic Emancipation; the Fight for the Repeal of the Union

WHEN Grattan achieved the legislative independence of Ireland in 1782 he proclaimed the birth of "a nation." As a matter of fact Ireland did not begin to take on the dignity of a nation until the beginning of the second decade of the nineteenth century. The parliament of the days of Flood and Grattan represented but an insignificant minority of the people and treated, either with hostility or contempt, the vast majority. This majority was Ireland. And this majority was pitiably submerged, reduced by governmental action to a condition of pathetic subserviency. From the enactment of the penal laws, the Catholics of Ireland, constituting at least four-fifths of the population, were treated with less consideration by the ruling classes than the beasts of the fields. They had no rights that any one was bound to respect. Browbeaten, butchered, robbed, dispossessed, proscribed through centuries, this vast mass had become dispirited, and apathetic.

Flood was a great patriot—but his patriotism contemplated the continued proscription and elimination

of the overwhelming majority of his countrymen; Lord Charlemont was a magnificent character, big in everything but the bigotry which impelled him to oppose all concessions to the Catholics; Henry Grattan would have taken his proscribed countrymen under the protection of the constitution, but his advocacy of their claims was tender of the prejudices of the Protestant minority, and while he won the commendation of the leaders of the majority, his leadership of the army of toleration failed to awaken the Catholic masses. The major part of the Irish people remained an inert mass —helpless, hopeless and afraid.

Then a new leader appeared in Ireland to awaken and move the sleeping people. His marvelous eloquence gave them courage. His superb organizing capacity converted the helpless mass into a militant force before which the empire trembled. He made The Irish Nation.

And in the process of the making he commanded the attention and won the admiration of the world. He was the Mirabeau of the open spaces. His meetings have never been equaled in numerical greatness in the history of the world. He spoke to hundreds of thousands and his word was law. He created a public opinion that could not be put down by bullets or bayonets. He taught the world the possibilities of a peaceful revolution. He was the first great agitator. Wendell Phillips, the most potential agitator in American history, has said that "the cause of constitutional government owes more to him than to any other political leader of the last two centuries."

Such, in brief, is the historical status of Daniel O'Connell—one of the most impressive figures of all

time, one of the most fascinating characters in all history.

I

It seems peculiarly appropriate that even O'Connell's birth and youth should have been dramatic. He sprang from ancient stock and from battling blood. There is much of the heroic, the god-like, in the legendary story of his ancestry—a story stretching back into the most glorious days of Erin's history. One of his ancestors fought at the head of a regiment for James II, and only laid down the sword when the monarch fled the country and gave up the fight. An uncle was one of the dashing figures in the army of the French Bourbons, and was loyal to the old régime when the holocaust came. Indeed the O'Connells were a loyal brood —devoted to king and church. They had little in common with the iconoclast.

The birth of Daniel O'Connell took place at Carhen, in the county of Kerry, on August sixth, 1775. Soon after his birth he was sent to the wife of his father's herdsman in the Iveragh mountains and there he remained for four years. His first impressions were of the wild life of the rugged hills and the simple, wholesome home of the mountaineer. It was while with the herdsman that Paul Jones, in command of three French vessels, arrived off the headlands of Kerry, and O'Connell's first recollection is of being taken by the herdsman to see some of the men. There was something dramatic in the situation which made an indelible impression upon the child whose life was to be a drama. Pottering, child-wise, about the rude cabin of his guardians, he learned to express his first

thoughts in the native Irish tongue. He spent his first four years in the heart of primitive Ireland—lulled to sleep with the beautiful legends of his race.

That he was precocious, we may readily believe. We are told by his son that he learned his alphabet, at the age of four, in an hour, while seated on the knee of David Mahony, a hedge schoolmaster, who won his confidence and affection by combing his tangled locks without pulling. At nine he preferred books to play, and we have pictures of him absorbed by the hour in the reading of Cook's *Voyages* and in tracing out the voyages on the map. At the age of ten, according to Hamilton's biography, he composed a drama on the fortunes of the house of Stuart, and while it is not extant, we may feel assured that it was written after the most approved Jacobin fashion. We might discredit the story of this literary venture but for the fact that Daniel was morbidly ambitious for fame at an age when the average lad has no higher aspiration than to excel in childish sports. On one occasion, in his ninth year, his father was entertaining some friends at dinner, and the conversation turned upon the policies and achievements of Flood, Grattan and Charlemont. The absorbed and melancholy air of little Dan attracted attention. "What ails you, Dan?" his father asked. "I'll make a stir in the world yet," doggedly replied the child.

Much of his childhood was spent amid the romantic scenery of Kerry, at Darrynane, the home of an uncle, and here he ran wild, a typical mountain boy, varying his excursions into the hills, with trips to some of the little islands near the mainland. His love for the mountains and the sea remained one of the passions of

Daniel O'Connell

his life. He narrowly escaped death in an effort to rid one of the islands of some wild bulls that terrified the people. Bubbling over with animal spirits, he sought adventure, and like a true son of Kerry, he usually found it.

In the spring of 1790 his father determined to send Dan and his brother to France to complete their education, but the unsettled conditions in that kingdom persuaded him to postpone their trip, and they were established for a while in a school near Cork, the first one to be opened by a priest after the relaxation of the barbarous penal laws. In the autumn, however, the father decided, contrary to the advice of his brother, then holding a commission in the French army, to send the boys to the famous school at Saint Omer's. The future liberator appears to have distinguished himself there. He studied Greek, Latin and French, composition and geography, and to these studies he added fencing, dancing and music. He entered with enthusiasm into the amateur theatricals of the college, and appears to have enjoyed himself thoroughly. It is significant that he read, in the original, and translated the orations of Cicero and Demosthenes and Dugaro, the Frenchman. Louis Cavrios, in his story of *O'Connell at Saint Omer's,* tells us that he was noted while there for his religious temperament, his retentive memory, solid judgment, quick intelligence and wealth of imagination. The president of the college, in writing to the father of the progress of the two boys, gives a detailed account of the brother and dismisses Dan with the significant sentence—"I never was so much mistaken in my life unless he be destined to make a remarkable figure in society."

There is some mystery surrounding the transfer of the O'Connell brothers to the college at Douay. Dan seems to have been delighted with this institution. The times, however, were now out of joint in France. The specter of anarchy was stalking through the land and knocking at the door of authority. No educational institution, with a religious foundation, was free from the possibility of attack. The boys at Douay were in constant fear that the revolutionaries would break in upon the school and massacre the students. A wagoner in the army of Dumouriez met Dan upon the road and abused him roundly as a "little aristocrat." The conditions grew rapidly worse, and, on the day of the execution of the king, the two Irish lads started to Calais on their return to England. On the way their carriage was attacked by republicans who struck the vehicle with their muskets as they shouted "young priests" and "young aristocrats." The memory of the incident clung to O'Connell throughout his life and his horror of the French Revolution and its participants had an important effect upon his political career. The moment he reached Calais and boarded the packet, he indignantly tore the tricolor from his cap and threw it into the sea, where it was rescued by some French fishermen who hurled their imprecations at him. It was then that he first learned of the execution of the king.

It is not surprising, therefore, that when he reached London and entered Lincoln's Inn for the study of law he was a pronounced reactionary, bitterly opposed to everything smacking of reform. Fortunately for his country and his kind his views underwent a radical change as a result of his attendance at the trial of

Hardy, who was charged with treason. After a year in London he returned to Dublin and entered Lincoln's Inn, where he completed his professional preparation.

Through Arthur Houston's *Early Life and Journal of O'Connell* we are permitted to follow the studies and mental processes of the future leader from 1795 until 1802. The journal reveals an O'Connell not generally known—a temperamental O'Connell consumed by an overweening ambition, given to self-depreciation and condemnation, and driven on two occasions to the thought of self-slaughter. The man who was to make it the practise of his mature manhood to rise at four o'clock, is here found continually prodding himself for his slothfulness and his disposition to linger late in bed; the future orator who was to electrify a world, scorned his own style as "shallow and not well thought out"; the great apostle of peace and enemy of physical violence here records with no little pride his quarrel over a girl, and the resultant fight; he whose word was as good as most men's bond herein despises himself for his propensity to falsehood; and the great agitator who was to ascribe the peacefulness of his monster meetings to the teachings of Father Matthew makes no secret in his journal of his participation in many a convivial spree.

With all this there are many queer and amusing side lights on his character. He naively records the efforts of a wicked woman to entangle him in her net, and his escape; and tells us of his determination to go alone at night to a graveyard to demonstrate to his own satisfaction his incredulity of ghosts. His studies during this period indicate a serious trend of mind. He read Boswell's *Johnson,* beginning it with a scoffing refer-

ence and concluding with an expression of admiration. Condorcet's *Life of Turgot,* Plutarch's *Lives,* and Rousseau's *Confessions* figure in his biographical reading. He read Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* and found it advantageous in the improvement of his literary style. Among the poets he studied the plays of Shakespeare, the *Paradise Lost* of Milton, Johnson's *London* and *Vanity of Human Wishes,* the tragedies of Voltaire, Akenside's *Pleasures of the Imagination,* Cowley's *Poems,* and Ossian. It is interesting to find him reading Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* and becoming converted to its enlightened doctrines. He confessed to a partiality for Lord Bolingbroke whose *Answer to the London Journal* and *Vindication* delighted him. He steeped himself in Grose's *Antiquities of Ireland,* and read the miscellaneous works of Hume, Gibbon and Voltaire. The most permanent and important impression of all seems to have been made upon him by Godwin's *Political Justice,* which had appeared but two or three years before, assailing monarchy, aristocracy and property, but opposing the methods of the French Revolution and contending that all real reforms must come through reason rather than force. This became the doctrine of his life, accounting for his disapproval of Emmet and the United Irishmen, and preparing the way for his break with the brilliant youths of Young Ireland.

Running all through the journal is the undercurrent of ambition. "Sometimes," he wrote, "—and indeed this happens most frequently—I am led away by vanity and ambition to imagine that I shall cut a great figure on the theater of the world."

That this thought of attaining celebrity was ever

present in his subconsciousness may properly be deduced from an incident connected with his desperate illness, in the early part of 1798, when he was stricken with a serious fever, as the result of falling to sleep in wet clothing in a peasant's hut after a hard morning's hunt. In his delirium he was heard to mutter the lines:

> "Unknown I die; no tongue shall speak of me:
> Some noble spirits, judging by themselves,
> May yet conjecture what I might have proved;
> And think life only wanting to my fame."

He was in Dublin, exposed to all the perils of his ambition, in the beginning of the rebellion of '98. It is difficult to determine just how close he came to being affiliated with the United Irishmen. True he served as a private in the Lawyers' Corps, and his son tells us that he was bitter against the United Irishmen on the ground that they had prepared the way for the union. We are informed, however, in the biography of Sister Cusack, that on one occasion, while drinking, he was bent on joining the society and aiding in the enlistment of men, and was saved from thus compromising himself by the good offices of his host.

Then again O'Neill Daunt, in his *Recollections,* quotes O'Connell as saying that he was a United Irishman. However that may be, the fact remains that during the worst days of the rebellion he was safe among the mountains of Kerry, and was never suspected of complicity by the authorities of the Castle. In the year of the rebellion he began the practise of his profession, making his first appearance as a barrister at Limerick. His professional fame grew rapidly. His powers of advocacy and his genius for cross-examina-

tion made him one of the most remarkable criminal lawyers of his time. It was while on the circuit that the news of the carrying of the union reached him. He was traveling through the somber mountain district from Killarney to Kenmare and his heart was sad and heavy. The day was wild and gloomy, and great black clouds were sailing through the sky; the solitude and the sober grandeur of the mountains reflected his feelings as he rode on with the realization that his country had suffered an overwhelming calamity. Who knows but that he may, then, among the mountains, have formed the resolution which was to mold his destiny?

He had not stood aloof from the fight to prevent the consummation of the tragedy which deprived his people of their parliament, and it was his participation, which marked his first appearance in the public affairs of Ireland. Pitt had attempted to bribe the Catholics into acquiescence by the promise of an amelioration of their condition, and the Castle disseminated the information that the Catholic majority looked with indifference upon the destruction of the parliament. To disprove the report O'Connell helped to organize a great meeting of the Catholics of Dublin to protest against the impending crime. Just as the meeting opened the red coats appeared at the door, and O'Connell, accompanied by others, advanced to meet their officers, and by a bold front, succeeded in preventing the dispersal of the gathering. It was on that occasion that O'Connell said:

"Let us show to Ireland that we have nothing in view but her good; nothing in our hearts but the desire of mutual forgiveness, mutual toleration and mutual affec-

tion; in fine, let every man who feels with me proclaim, that if the alternative were offered to him of union or the re-enactment of the penal code in all its pristine horrors, that he would prefer without hesitation the latter as the lesser and more sufferable evil; and that he would rather confide in the justice of his brethren, the Protestants of Ireland, who have already liberated him, than lay his country at the feet of foreigners."

Such was the liberator's introduction to public life. Henceforth, after a brief interval, we shall find him engaged continuously in battling for the emancipation of his people, and the independence of his country.

II

The political career of O'Connell may be divided into two distinct parts, one dealing with his long and successful fight for Catholic emancipation, the other with the spectacular and brilliant, though futile, fight for the repeal of the act of union. The recital, in detail, of all the important features of his fight for emancipation would require volumes, and the telling of the story consecutively would not serve the purpose of this study. Looking back over the twenty years of his miraculous leadership of his coreligionists we shall, instead, point out the principal features of his policy—a policy so brilliant both in its conception and execution as to have pointed to all the world the way of great constitutional reforms.

The leadership of O'Connell probably dates from about 1808 when he carried the Catholic committee with him in a disagreement as to policy with the venerable John Keogh. The death of Pitt, the inveterate

enemy of Ireland, in 1806, and the consequent triumph of the Whigs who had posed for years as the particular champions of the Irish people, impelled many of the leaders in the cause of emancipation voluntarily to declare an armistice. It was their contention that the Whigs should not be embarrassed by the demands for emancipation until they should have had an opportunity firmly to fix themselves in the saddle. "Let's wait and see what they will do"—was the suggestion from this quarter. From another quarter came opposition to the policy of petitioning parliament for relief, year after year, regardless of the prospects of success. The foremost exponent of this idea was none less than John Keogh. He insisted that the Irish Catholics merely subjected themselves to needless humiliation and rebuff, and that more would ultimately be accomplished by retiring from the contest and maintaining a "dignified silence."

To one of O'Connell's assertiveness and combativeness this idea seemed preposterous, and "dignified silence" spelt surrender. He contended that nothing would do so much toward disheartening and disorganizing the Catholics, and encouraging the English politicians in the continuance of their traditional policy of oppression. The clash of the two ideas came in January, 1808, when the committee met to determine upon the wisdom of preparing a petition. The followers of Keogh opposed the petition on the grounds just indicated, and on the further ground that the meeting had been hastily called without giving the people an opportunity to express their views. The more aggressive element met these objections with the eloquence of O'Connell, who showed that the people had been inter-

rogated by letter, that the demand for a petition was overwhelming and unmistakable, and that if the Catholics of Ireland stood firm and presented a solid front they would have nothing to fear from the "barren petulance of the ex-advocate Percival," or the "frothy declamation of the poetaster Canning" or the "pompous inanity of Lord Castlereagh, who might well be permitted to hate the country that gave him birth to her own annihilation." This speech, by its enthusiasm and eloquence, swept the committee away from the conservatism of Keogh and into the control of the younger and greater man. From that hour, for more than twenty years, the greater part of the burdens of leadership rested upon the broad shoulders of the man from Kerry.

Never perhaps during a single hour of the two decades that followed did he waver in his faith. In season and out of season he labored in the cause, at times bearing the entire expense of the propaganda, at all times arranging the meetings, attending to the voluminous correspondence, preparing the resolutions, organizing the petitions, arousing the masses by his Mirabeauan eloquence, protecting his people against the snares of the law, and, in the darkest periods, sustaining the fainting spirits of the faithful with an optimism and spirit that was contagious. In the contemplation of his career the casual reader may conclude that the secret of his success was the witchery of his eloquence. A closer view, however, reveals him as one of the most astute and consummate politicians in the world's history. He saw clearer and further than most men. He knew by intuition the psychological moment for action. He was a master opportunist. He kept his fingers

upon the pulse of public opinion—and thus he directed sentiment, mastered sentiment, created sentiment.

Throughout the fight he never faltered in the faith that continual agitation was essential to ultimate success. When the charge was made in 1812 that the Catholics had injured their cause by their activity and persistency he indignantly replied:

"But our tone is disliked—yes, my lord, they dislike the tone which men should use who are deeply anxious for the good of their country, and who have no other object. We are impressed with a sense of the perils that surround us, and of all the calamities impending on a divided and distracted people. We see our own resources lavishly squandered upon absurd projects, whilst our tottering paper currency is verging fast to bankruptcy—the fate of every other paper currency that ever existed. We see the private ruin that must ensue, the destruction of the funded system. We see the most formidable military force arrayed on the continent. The emperor of the European world is now busied with some quarrel on the northern frontier, which now extends to the suburbs of St. Petersburg; his fleet augments by the month; who shall dare to say that we shall not have to fight on our own shores for the last refuge of civil liberty in this eastern world. What blindness, what infatuation, not to prepare for that event.

"We, my lord, assume the tone that may terrify the invader; we use the tone of men who appreciate the value of civil liberty, and who would die sooner than exchange it for the iron sway of military rule. We talk as men should who dread slavery and disgrace, but laugh to scorn the idea of danger. Shall it be asked if the invader arrived—

> "And were there none—no Irish arm,
> In whose veins the native blood runs warm?
> And was there no heart in the trampled land,

That spurned the oppressor's proud command?
Could the wronged realm no arm supply,
But the abject tear and the slavish sigh?

"Why yes, my lord, we are told that if we had been servile and base in our language, and dastardly in our conduct, we should be nearer success; that the 'slavish tear' and the 'abject sigh' would have suited our dignity; that, had we shown ourselves prone to servility and submission, and silent in oppression, we should advance our emancipation; and that by proving, by our words and actions, that we deserve to be slaves—we should insure liberty."

Thus did he push forward, scornfully brushing aside every suggestion of an armistice. This was something entirely new for English politicians who had been accustomed to sporadic agitation on Irish subjects. The primary explanation of O'Connell's success in agitation was that he kept everlastingly at it.

The fiercest and most vital opposition he encountered in his leadership in the matter of policy grew out of the historic contest regarding the "veto" or "securities." The pretended friends of concession, in England, assumed to fear that the unqualified emancipation of the Catholics, without securities of any character as to the personnel of the Irish churchmen, would be dangerous to the empire and fatal to the established church in Ireland. It was proposed that the government should possess the power of veto over the appointment of the bishops. This proposition was acquiesced in by the parliamentary leaders of the Catholic cause, who received their cue largely from the laity of the upper class who were ready to accept anything smacking of a concession, and were unable to see that

certain concessions were remedies equal to the disease. During the summer of 1812, following the failure of the motion to consider the claims in the house of lords, by just one vote, the bigots of England took alarm, and began a counter agitation of the most virulent nature. The "No-Popery" cry was heard all over England, the London press became especially vicious in its intolerance, and every encouragement was held out to the organization of Orange societies in Ireland. The indications pointed to a period of religious persecution, and the Catholics, thoroughly aroused, held numerous meetings over the country. Not only were the people apprehensive of persecution, but they found an even greater occasion for alarm in the rumor that the government was preparing, in connection with the proposed relief bill, some such plan of ecclesiastical interference as the veto.

In one of his great popular speeches at Limerick, O'Connell met the danger on the road and challenged it with a boldness that contributed largely to the molding of public opinion.

"And can there be any honest man," he said, "deceived by the cant and cry for securities? Is there any man that believes that there is safety in oppression, contumely and insult, and that security is necessary against protection, liberality and conciliation? Does any man really suppose that there is no danger from the continuance of unjust grievances and exasperating intolerance, and that security is wanting against the effects of justice and perfect toleration? Who is it that is idiot enough to believe that he is quite safe in dissension, disunion and animosity, and wants a protection against harmony, benevolence and charity?—that in hatred there is safety, in affection ruin?—that, now that we are excluded from

the constitution, we may be loyal; but that if we were entrusted personally with its safety, we would wish to destroy it?

"But this is a pitiful delusion. There was indeed a time when sanctions and securities might have been deemed necessary; when the Catholic was treated as an enemy to God and man; when his property was the prey of legalized plunder; his religion, and its sacred ministers, the object of legalized persecution; when, in defiance and contempt of the dictates of justice and the faith of treaties—and I attest the venerable city in which I stand that solemn treaties were basely violated—the English faction in the land turned the Protestant into an intolerant and murderous bigot, in order that it might in security plunder that very Protestant, and oppress his and our common country. Poor neglected Ireland! At that period securities might be supposed wanting; the people of Ireland—the Catholic population of Ireland—were then as brave and strong, comparatively, as they are at present; and the country then afforded advantages for the desultory warfare of a valiant peasantry, which, fortunately, have since been exploded by increasing cultivation.

"At the period to which I allude the Stuart family was still in existence; they possessed a strong claim to the exaggerating allegiance and unbending fidelity of the Irish people. Every right that hereditary descent could give the royal race of Stuart, they possessed—in private life, too, they were endeared to the Irish, because they were, even the worst of them, gentlemen. But they had still stronger claims on the sympathy and generosity of the Irish: they had been exalted and were fallen; they had possessed thrones and kingdoms, and were then in poverty and humiliation. All the enthusiastic sympathies of the Irish heart were roused for them; and all the powerful motives of personal interest bore, in the same channel, the restoration of their rights—the triumph of their religion, the restitution of their ancient inheritances would then have been the certain and immediate conse-

quences of the success of the Stuart family in their pretensions to the throne.

"At the period to which I allude the Catholic clergy were bound by no oath of allegiance; to be a dignitary of the Catholic church in Ireland was a transportable felony—and the oath of allegiance was so mingled with religious tenets that no clergyman or layman of the Catholic persuasion could possibly take it. At that period the Catholic clergymen were all educated in foreign countries, under the eye of the pope, and within the inspection of the house of Stuart. From fifty-eight colleges and convents on the continent did the Catholic clergy repair to meet, for the sake of their God, poverty, persecution, contumely and not infrequently death, in their native land. They were often hunted like wild beasts and never could claim any protection from the law. That, that was a period when securities might well have been necessary, when sanctions and securities might well have been requisite. . . .

"How do I prove the continued loyalty of the Catholics of Ireland under every persecution? I do not appeal for any proofs to their own records, however genuine; I appeal merely to the testimony of their rulers and their enemies. I appeal to the letters of Primate Boulter—to the state papers of the humane and patriotic Chesterfield. I have their loyalty through the admissions of every secretary and governor of Ireland, until it is finally and conclusively put on record by the legislature of Ireland itself. The relaxing statutes expressly declare that the penal laws ought to be repealed, not from motives of policy or growing liberality, but (I quote the words) 'because of the long continued and uninterrupted loyalty of the Catholics.' This is the consummation of my proof—and I defy the veriest disciple of the doctrine of delusion to overturn it."

Notwithstanding the popular sentiment against the securities, when Grattan submitted his Relief bill to parliament in 1813 these were incorporated. When it

passed the house in its preliminary stages the people of Ireland were at loss whether to rejoice over the growing liberality of the English or to lament the presence of the humiliating veto. But when it was finally fatally emasculated, by the elimination of the clause granting the right to sit in parliament, and was consequently withdrawn, O'Connell openly rejoiced. The prelates of Dublin had met and passed resolutions condemnatory of the bill with its securities and at the next meeting of the Catholic board, O'Connell took advantage of the opportunity to return to the attack. This he did by showing the probable character of the commission provided for in the bill to sit in judgment on the church affairs of the Catholics. His proposal of a vote of thanks to the prelates brought on a debate in which Councilor Bellew defended the "securities." This called forth from O'Connell a stinging rebuke:

"But, said their learned advocate, they have a right to demand, because they stand in need of securities. I deny the right—I deny the need. What security have they had for a century that has elapsed since the violation of the treaty of Limerick? What security have they had during these years of oppression and barbarous and bloody legislation? What security have they had whilst the hereditary claim of the house of Stuart remained? . . . What security had the English from our bishops when England was invaded and the unfortunate but gallant Prince Charles advanced into the heart of England, guided by valor and accompanied by a handful of brave men who had, under his command, obtained more than one victory? He was a man likely to excite and to gratify Irish enthusiasm; he was chivalrous and brave; he was a man of honor and a gentleman, no violator of his word; he spent not his time in making his soldiers ridiculous, with horsetails and white feathers; he did not con-

sume his mornings in tasting curious drams, and evenings in gallanting old women. What security had the English then? What security had they against our bishops and our laity when America nobly flung off the yoke that had become too heavy to be borne, and sought her independence at the risk of her being? What security had they then? I will tell you, my lord. The security at those periods was perfect and complete, because it existed in the conscientious allegiance of the Catholics; it consisted in the duty of allegiance which the Irish Catholics have ever held and will, I trust, ever hold sacred; it consisted in the conscientious submission to legitimate authority, however oppressive, which our bishops have always preached and our laity have always practised."

The Bellew to whom O'Connell replied, was a type all too well known in the history of Ireland. At the time he spoke in favor of the securities he was receiving two pensions from the government, and within two weeks after the debate with O'Connell he was rewarded with a third! However triumphant O'Connell may have been in his contests on the board, he was not the man to rest his case with a few if he could appeal to the many; and his opportunity to appeal to the many came in June, 1813, at a great aggregate meeting in the Fishamble-Street theater where resolutions demanding unqualified emancipation were offered and unanimously carried.

While the views of O'Connell met with general approbation, the fight over the securities continued with unabated fury, and in the autumn of 1813 the advocates of the veto found their most brilliant and plausible champion in Richard Lalor Sheil, who opposed a resolution against the securities offered at a board meeting. It was the first notable appearance of the

amazing genius whose exceptional possibilities were immediately recognized by the liberator. One of the secrets of the success of his leadership was his perfect appraisement of men, and his utter lack of jealousy. In his brilliant reply to Sheil he was careful to compliment the young orator upon his capacity and promise and to offer him a position of leadership in the army of unconditional emancipation. We see a little later on, the harvest from the seed of conciliation thus sown.

When it was learned, in 1814, that Grattan declined to present the Catholic petition with the injunction of "no securities," O'Connell, instead of weakening in his faith, became, if anything, more insistent in his determination to win unqualified emancipation or none at all.

The refusal of O'Connell to compromise on the securities or to concede the leadership of Grattan in the matter only intensified the fight during the year 1814. The advocates of the securities made a strenuous effort to turn the tide of public opinion at a great meeting in the county Clare, where Chief Baron Woulfe, a man of unusual ability, delivered a carefully prepared speech in which, among other things, he accused O'Connell of having made an attack upon Grattan. The reply of O'Connell on this occasion was in his best "mob" style—as Lecky would have called it. He indignantly denied the least abuse of Grattan, but declined to be diverted from the issue, and in an analysis of the bill which was defeated, he showed that it would have compromised the religion of the Catholics, and destroyed the liberty of the people; the one by converting the prelates into subservient defenders of the government, the other by forcing these political prelates

into becoming the electioneering agents of the government against the liberties of the subject.

Then came the bomb into the camp of the O'Connellites!

During the captivity of the pope, a message came from Rome, signed by Monsignor Quarantotti, vice-prefect of Rome, assenting to the securities. This was a staggering blow—but it did not daze O'Connell. Instantly and indignantly he repudiated it. However, it had its effect and partly disarmed him. Quick on its heels came the abolishment of the Catholic board by the government. The year came to a close in gloom. In the drawing-room meetings, that followed the proscription of the board, he continued the struggle—and unfortunately the drawing-room type of agitator was all too prone to compromise. In the summer of 1815, when the question arose as to whom the Catholic petition should be entrusted in parliament, he successfully contended that a committee should be sent to London to find some Englishman who would stand sponsor for a petition containing the "no security" injunction. Two months later he won his long drawn battle when the prelates of Ireland took their position unqualifiedly and finally against any form of security which would in any way interfere with the discipline or organization of the church.

In his fight in favor of constant action and vigorous agitation O'Connell had prevailed over John Keogh—the early leader of the Irish Catholics. In his battle against the securities, he overthrew the power of the Catholic aristocracy, and supplanted Grattan and Plunkett in the acknowledged leadership of the Irish people. By sheer force of intense conviction he fought his way

to leadership. The burden was now upon him. Defeat would be ascribed to his mistakes, and success would be his triumph. We shall now note his methods of leadership—the various strategies by which he forced the movement forward to ultimate victory.

III

One of the most noticeable features of his policy was his effort to conciliate and enlist the services of the liberally inclined Protestants of Ireland. It is well to bear in mind in the study of the career of O'Connell that throughout the twenty-year struggle for the emancipation of his coreligionists he had in mind the restoration of the parliament of Ireland. He knew that emancipation was a necessary means to the end —the repeal of the union. Thus he did everything within his power to break down the barriers of bigotry in Ireland and to consolidate the people of all religions into an aggressive and united nationality. Thus in 1813, when the Catholics of Dublin prepared their petition to parliament, he entrusted its composition to the gifted young Protestant, Charles Phillips* —and then he proclaimed and eulogized the author. When, in the spring of 1811, the Catholics gave a din-

* Charles Phillips was a remarkable genius, a graceful poet, a successful lawyer, a clever writer, and a brilliant orator whose speeches were marred by over-adornment. His speeches published in his twenty-ninth year called down upon him the sarcastic criticisms of the reviewers, and while he lived to a ripe old age and became a leader of the Old Bailey Bar of London and a jurist, he never afterward published his speeches. His tribute to Washington at banquet and his character sketch of Napoleon are little masterpieces and have survived. His *Reminiscences of Curran,* written in three weeks, is a fascinating work.

ner to some of their Protestant supporters in Dublin, O'Connell said:

"This, I believe, is the first time Catholics and Protestants have publicly assembled at the festive board—alas, the first time we have sought access to each other's hearts. If such meetings shall frequently take place, and I trust in God they will, it is impossible that your great and ancient nation—your nation famed for every physical good which can make existence valuable, and which has given birth to the best and the bravest of the human race—it is impossible, I say, that any minister can tyrannize over you, or any foe effect your subjugation. If the spirit shall go abroad which pervades this meeting, it is not too much to expect that your enfranchisement is at hand; that your parliament must be restored. As it is the habit of men who follow my trade to talk much, you may, perhaps, fear that I trespass on your attention; but I shall be brief. A bigot—be he of what profession he may, whether Catholic or Protestant; of what rank soever, whether monarch, peer or peasant; whether his brow is encircled with a diadem or his body enveloped in rags—is a bigot to me. Louis XIV disgracefully treated a brave and skilled warrior, Admiral Duchesne, because he was a Protestant; and Louis XIV was therefore an outrageous bigot. Our gracious prince, who is the parent of his Irish people, has given an earnest of what we may expect from him by refusing to comply with the corrupt requisition of a minister; he will unite us and therefore have, instead of one regiment of his own Irish, an entire nation."

Some time after this, at a dinner given to the Friends of Religious Liberty, where Henry Grattan, John Philpot Curran and Sir Henry Parnell were among the guests, O'Connell made an even stronger appeal for support of the liberal Protestants:

"You have, my Protestant brothers," he said, "an interest in the hearts, and a control over the hands, of one million of men—as brave and hardy a race as ever the world saw; let the enemy come when he may, your liberality will recruit a mass of unbought millions. I have the honor of bearing my very humble testimony to the worth of our noble chairman, who has been ever upright and consistent. The life and blood and spirit of every Catholic in Ireland is with him. Having briefly given my genuine sentiments, I wish that the recollection of this day should never be erased from your memories. Nor should the remembrance of our friends present be ever lost. The day, the persons and the occasion of meeting should be immortalized. . . . I would scorn emancipation if it were to injure the poorest of my Protestant countrymen. Let any man prove to me that Catholic emancipation can be detrimental to the meanest member of the established church, and I will cheerfully consent to forego it. The principle which has given aid to Spain and Portugal should be extended to Ireland. That spirit which God has given the human mind can not be extinguished by human efforts; and for man to interfere with it is a flagrant act of impiety."

Again, in 1819, at a great Catholic meeting in Dublin, with the Earl of Fingal in the chair, O'Connell, speaking to a resolution of thanks to the Protestants for their support, said:

"But the happy, the glorious era which must be immortal in the history of Ireland has arrived—yes, had arrived, and is no longer to be wished for, when these odious and devastating distinctions were removed. Protestants have assembled and expressed their honorable feeling on the claims of their Catholic friends and brethren. The first Protestant nobleman of the country, the Duke of Leinster, one of whose ancestors was brought to the bar of the house of lords on the broad plea of

being more Irish than the Irish themselves,' whose diffidence became his youthful years—it was delightful to see him shaking off that diffidence which, if it continued, must impede his political career, and leading on that glorious array of Protestant benevolence: the Earl of Meath, always a friend and patron of Ireland; Charlemont, whose name is music to Irish ears; Grattan, whose eloquence and virtue raised Ireland into independence and liberty—the old patriot, Grattan, who had given Ireland all she had, and would have made her all she ought to be. . . . Let Catholics continue to deserve, and Protestants to reward with their good wishes and confidence, and the motto of Ireland in future be—'God and our native land.'"

It was with this idea of making a nation that he prevailed upon the Catholic board in 1813 to declare in favor of the exclusive consumption of articles of Irish manufacture. This policy was calculated to make a favorable impression upon the Protestant manufacturing interests of the north, and to impress upon the people the really national character of the agitation he was fostering. In view of the wretched conditions then existing in the manufacturing districts of Ireland, the Catholic board had assumed a sympathetic attitude toward the artisans who were unemployed. It was following this action of the board that O'Connell submitted his proposition in favor of Irish manufacture.

"It is useless for the board to speak if it does not act," he said. "It would be guilty of a great crime indeed if, after promising these poor people to find work for them, it were to content itself with the mere promise instead of the performance. With this impression upon my mind I am anxious to bring forward some measure

which may give effect to the resolutions already passed. The cotton manufacturers, in particular, are suffering the extreme of misery. The present period of the year is that in which their fabrics may best be used; and I have reason to know that if the sale of English goods were to be suspended but for one day in this city, and that of Irish substituted, there would not be a single piece of goods left on hands. It is idle for gentlemen to talk of public spirit and patriotism, or even of common humanity, if the knowledge of such a fact as this does not inspire them to deeds as well as words. Upon making up the annual accounts of the sale of cotton manufacture, it was clearly established that there is not so much of the Irish manufacture sold in the entire year as of the English in one day. Can any person with Irish feelings listen to this statement and refuse to make the slight sacrifice of purchasing the work of his countrymen in preference to English manufacture, which he might suppose better or handsomer? But in point of fact it is not better or handsomer. The manufacture of all kinds of clothing has much improved under all the discouraging circumstances. What perfection may it not arrive at if it but receive the countenance of the inhabitants? Instead of having it said 'It must be good because it is English,' I want it said 'It must be good because it is Irish.'"

A characteristic of O'Connell's leadership was its strictly constitutional character and, consequently, its comparative immunity from the successful attacks of the Castle. The attempt to put down the Catholic committee at its meeting of February twenty-three, 1811, by an order of dispersal from the Castle, was thwarted by the defiant insistence of the liberator that no law was being violated. The astonished official returned to the Castle with the message of O'Connell —and the meeting was not dispersed. Such incidents

were frequent during the next twenty years. It was not on such occasions as these that the liberator feared for his people.

In the summer of 1813 a vicious effort was made by the government to poison the people of England against the Irish Catholics, and the most infamous falsehoods regarding their lawlessness were disseminated through the English press. The bitterness of the bigots served to engender a kindred feeling in the breasts of the Irish masses, and the temptation to join secret societies to meet the aggressions of the Orangemen was almost irresistible. The situation appealed to O'Connell as being packed with dynamite. Time and again we find him warning his people against these seditious organizations and urging them to keep within the law.

Even more difficult, however, than preventing lawlessness was the task of preserving harmony within his own army. The one great curse of the Irish people has ever been their disposition to quarrel among themselves. No one understood it better than O'Connell. Not only did he feel that it was essential to have harmony among the Catholics, but, as we have seen, unity among the Irish people. The most commanding phase of his genius was his capacity as a harmonizer—his power as a peace maker. It was the unique element in his leadership. It accounts in a large degree for his final triumph. He was put to the test early in his leadership, in 1811, when the most acrimonious dissensions broke out in the committee. The country gentlemen resented the assumption of the representatives of Dublin, the farmers attacked the lawyers, a veritable tempest in a teapot, all due to petty

jealousies, threatened to disorganize and utterly demoralize. In one of the most stormy meetings O'Connell poured oil upon the troubled waters. Turning to both factions he exclaimed:

"Could anything be imagined more agreeable to the Wellesleys and the Percivals than to find the Catholics of Ireland involved in a wrangle among themselves—than to see them engaged in attacking and vilifying one another when every faculty of their minds ought to be directed to concert one combined effort of all the Irish people to put down their enemies and to procure, in a constitutional course, their emancipation?"

Again we find him bringing the warring factions to their sober senses with a solemn recitation of history:

"The old curse of the Catholics is, I fear, about to be renewed; division—and that made us what we are, and keeps us so—is again to rear its standard amongst us; but it was thus always with the Irish Catholics. I recollect that in reading the life of the great Duke of Ormond, as he is called, I was forcibly struck with a dispatch of his, transmitted about the year 1661, when he was lord lieutenant of Ireland. It was written to vindicate himself from the charge of having favored the papists, and having given them permission to hold a public meeting in Dublin. His answer is remarkable. He rejects with disdain the foul calumny of being a favorer of papists, though he admits he gave them leave to meet: 'Because,' said he, 'I know by experience that the Irish papists never meet without dividing and degrading themselves.'"

In looking over the proceedings of the Catholic committee and board one is impressed with the frequency

with which O'Connell diplomatically smooths away a difference with a suggestion, or prevents a division by a personal appeal. "Let me suggest, by way of accommodating the difference, an amendment," he begins—and the threatened trouble is over. "My God, are gentlemen so wedded to their opinions as not to yield a little for the sake of unanimity?" he exclaims, and the obstreperous one is shamed into submission.

We have seen how O'Connell won the position of leadership—by the boldness of his program and his refusal to compromise with the common enemy. He had, through his majestic eloquence, carried his name to the most remote quarters. He was the cynosure of the Catholics of the world. He had aroused a people that had slept for six long centuries. The awakening had sent a thrill of fear through the government. It had followed the every move of the orator with its spies and reporters, but it found nothing upon which to base a prosecution. The country was comparatively peaceful. The lawlessness was on the other side. But something had to be done—regardless of the law. Thus the Catholic committee was suppressed. Thus was the Catholic board put down. Thus were the masses of Ireland proscribed. But all that England did was nothing compared to what Ireland did to wreck the movement. The aristocratic element of the Catholics, still hugging the securities, and voicing its discord through the sporadic speech of Sheil; the abandonment of the cause in parliament by its former champions; the outlawry of organization had their inevitable effect. The people, discouraged, became apathetic. The specter of despair swooped down upon the many. But there was one who never

despaired. He knew that the reaction would come, and he waited until the time was ripe. And then he called to his side one who had fought him from the platform, denounced him through the press. During the hopeless days from 1821 until 1823 O'Connell communicated his spirit to the people through annual letters, and one man—an Irishman and a Catholic—replied in a spiteful letter full of venom. This was Richard Lalor Sheil—and it was Sheil that O'Connell called to his side when he prepared to launch the Catholic association. What manner of man was O'Connell that he could not only forgive an enemy but exalt him? Before we enter upon the next and final phase of the emancipation fight, let us turn for a moment to contemplate the greatness of O'Connell, the man who was big enough to put jealousy aside. This was one of the secrets of his greatness. How great he was in this respect we shall now see.

IV

During the long period of his leadership O'Connell found it necessary according to his light to assume an aggressively hostile attitude toward many Irish patriots upon plain matters of policy and principle. It is worthy of notice that the three foremost champions of emancipation, after the liberator himself, were constrained at different times to criticize O'Connell with a severity verging on virulence. Each of these immortal three—Grattan, Plunkett and Sheil—personally denounced him. The attack upon him by Grattan was in the most cutting style of that master of denunciation. Lord Plunkett made no secret of his dis-

taste for the methods of the agitator or for the man himself. Sheil sought opportunities to refer to him in terms of contempt. It is creditable to the generalship of O'Connell that he did not reply in kind to any of the three. He met their arguments and passed their personalities without a word. He doubtless understood that a wordy war within the Irish camp would give aid and comfort to the enemy—but his restraint can not be accounted for on the grounds of policy alone. He was too big and broad to permit another man's ill opinion of him to affect his opinion of the other man.

The differences between O'Connell and Grattan on the securities were deep and abiding, and up until the hour of his death the latter entertained the opinion that the liberator was wrecking the prospects of his country. The father of the independent parliament was not free from jealousy, and it was doubtless with something of bitterness that he beheld the younger man displacing him in the leadership of the Irish masses. During the heat of the contest he made a bitter personal attack upon O'Connell, which was ignored. The liberator continued to battle against the securities, but never did he permit himself to be swept into an attack upon the venerable statesman who had done so much for Ireland. We have already shown that his criticisms of Grattan were invariably softened by tributes to his patriotism. Immediately after his death, when his son became a candidate to succeed him in parliament, O'Connell plunged impetuously into the fight in his behalf; and in this speech we see how little Grattan's attack upon him had influenced his affection for and appreciation of Grattan:

"We are met on this melancholy occasion to celebrate the obsequies of the greatest man Ireland ever saw. The widowed land of his birth, in mourning over his remains, feels it is a nation's sorrow, and turns with the anxiety of a parent to alleviate the grief of the orphan he has left. The virtues of that great patriot shone brilliant, pure, unsullied, ardent, unremitting, glowing. Oh, I should exhaust the dictionary three times told, ere I could enumerate the virtues of Grattan.

"In 1778, when Ireland was shackled, he reared the standard of independence; and in 1782 he stood forward as the champion of his country, achieving gloriously her independence. Earnestly, unremittingly did he labor for her; bitterly did he deplore her wrongs, and if man could have prevented her ruin—if man could have saved her—Grattan would have done it.

"After the disastrous act of union, which met his most resolute and most determined opposition, he did not suffer despair to creep over his heart and induce him to abandon her, as was the case with too many others. No; he remained firm to his duty in the darkest adversity; he continued his unwearying advocacy of his country's rights. Of him it may be truly said, in his own words—'He watched over her cradle, he followed her hearse.'"

In the case of Lord Plunkett the liberator encountered the same sort of opposition as from Grattan, and for the same reason. It is quite probable that O'Connell appealed even less to Plunkett than he did to Grattan, in that the former was less in sympathy temperamentally with democracy or agitation. And yet, in his letter to the people of Ireland in 1821, in which he set forth his reasons for refusing his support to the relief bill proposed by Plunkett, we find him, in referring to the man who had apologized to England for the agitation of the liberator, paying a tribute to his genius:

"As a professional man, I am perfectly sensible of his merits. I have known the powers of the first advocates of modern times—Erskine and Curran, Romilly and Ball —and I have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Plunkett is more useful than any one of them; he combines a strength of mind and clearness of intellect with a perpetual and unceasing readiness in a degree which probably very few men, perhaps no man, ever possessed before. Others may exceed him in the higher order of eloquence, but in practical utility as an advocate there is no living man at either bar, in England or Ireland, to compare with him."

In keeping with this is his tribute to Lord Brougham, with whom he frequently disagreed, and from whom he was subjected to a severe attack because of the radicalism of his demands. The fact that he fought him on some propositions could not blind him to the services the eloquent Scotchman had rendered to the cause of civil and religious liberty, and we see him declaring that "if our country should have occasion to erect a monument, not to a Wellington, but to perpetuate the resurrection of Ireland from the evils of the union and the curse of intolerance, oppression and persecution, the first name written over the altar of justice should be 'Henry Brougham.' "

In the case of Richard Lalor Sheil there was much to provoke O'Connell's lasting hostility. The brilliant little genius had assailed the no-compromise program of the liberator with extraordinary eloquence and some effect, and when, in 1821, O'Connell issued his annual address to the people, Sheil had put forth a counter-address assailing the leader with bitterness and spleen. During the dark days of the movement, with dissension from within, and proscription from without, Sheil

had stubbornly declined to yield on the veto and had charged O'Connell with responsibility for the lack of union. It is characteristic of the liberator that throughout these controversies his impatience with Sheil never caused him to lose sight of his remarkable capacity for good. In the very first brush between them, he had taken occasion to pay him the highest possible tribute.

"Let my young friend join this standard," he had said, "and soon shall he become a leader. To the superiority of his talent we shall cheerfully yield, and give him that station in his country's cause to which his high genius entitles him."

The unique quality of mind which made it possible for him to exalt others to his own depreciation, and to measure properly the virtues of men who saw no virtue in him, made ultimate success possible.

In 1823 a memorable meeting of gentlemen took place in a private house. The subject of discussion was the state of the country, the prospects for emancipation, the lamentable lack of aggressive organization and agitation. It was the consensus of opinion that the hour had struck for an audacious dash for religious and civil liberty. The most virile character in the company was Daniel O'Connell. In a moment of inspiration he turned to a little man in the room and challenged him to join in the organization of a new and broader movement for emancipation, and to cooperate in conveying the message to the waiting millions. The little man accepted the challenge—and Daniel O'Connell and Richard Lalor Sheil—united at last—passed from the house of their mutual friend to launch the

great and ultimately irresistible Catholic association which was to stir old Ireland to its foundation, and after six years of unparalleled activity to crown the cause with victory.

V

On April twenty-fifth, 1823, a few men met in rooms in Sackville Street, Dublin, and launched the tremendous organization which Lecky, the historian, was to pronounce "one of the most powerful political bodies ever known in history." And yet, how insignificant, how inauspicious the beginning! Less than fifty men formed the nucleus of the association that was to embrace the major part of Ireland within two years. There was something almost pathetic in the speech of O'Connell on the occasion of the initial meeting in which he apologized for taking the initiative on the ground that "some one" had to make it his business. It is surprising to find that with only ten members necessary to a quorum, the business of the association in its early days was frequently postponed for want of the necessary number. On one occasion we find O'Connell rushing from the room just before the hour set for the meeting, seizing two reluctant and astonished young priests from a book store, and dragging them into the rooms of the association just in time to form a quorum.

But this apathetic attitude was only temporary. A little while, and the marvelous eloquence of O'Connell and Sheil, thundering from a hundred rostrums, in all sections, aroused the masses to a realization of their opportunity. And it was the masses that O'Connell

sought. The curse of the movement for emancipation in the past had been that the active workers had been confined to the aristocratic element. The millions looked on as spectators—a thing apart. It was the mission and the purpose of O'Connell to harness this tremendous power to the chariot of emancipation. This he proposed to do by making them members of the association through the payment of a shilling a year. The amount was small, but every peasant who paid his penny a month would know that he too was enlisted in the war. And in the end the shillings would amount to pounds. In addition to this plan of enlisting the interest of the masses, he proposed to recruit the clergy, and to make them the leaders of the people. The priests and the people—a new idea, a dynamic idea. And it worked. Within a little while the association had a great working income—an income with which to carry on a propaganda through the press, to defray parliamentary expenses, to meet the necessities of the law, and for the maintenance of an agent in London to look after the work in parliament. Before the end of 1824 the Catholic Rent, as this was called, amounted to nine hundred pounds a week, and ere the expiration of another year it had reached the amazing figure of from a thousand to twelve hundred pounds a week. Little wonder that England was startled in contemplating the possibilities of poverty-stricken but patriotic Ireland.

And how was it done?

By organization, by agitation, through the amalgamation of all classes, Paddy, the peasant, linking arms with the peer, and led on by the priest—now a militant force. The little island was lashed into a storm

by the ferocity of O'Connell's attacks upon the government, his exposé of its iniquities, his shaming of the pusillanimity of the people. He shocked them into activity. At the first aggregate meeting following the perfection of the organization he struck the keynote of his campaign in the declaration that the Catholics would either stand up and fight or submit to continuous indignities and oppression. Referring to the generous manner in which they had abandoned their agitation, out of deference to the visiting monarch, he exclaimed:

"At that period I defy the tongue of malignity—the most shameless audacity of that compound of stupidity and slanderous villainy—produced from the crazed brain of a reverend fox-hunter, and translated afterward into better English by his coadjutor—*The Warder,* even to assert that anything was wanting on the part of the Catholics. I defy, too, the scribblers in that paper's credible ally—that reservoir of baseness and calumny, in which truth never appears but by accident, *The Mail;* I defy their virulence—nay, I would appeal to their candor, if of such an attribute they could for a moment be supposed to be possessed, to point out any one occasion—any one in which the Catholics, either in act, in writing or in speeching, can be truly said to have, in the slightest degree, been accessory to the failure of our gracious monarch's blessed work of conciliation.

"And what has been the result of our having so meritoriously conducted ourselves? Need I ask you? Has it not been that our cause is abandoned, and that we have neglected our duty to ourselves? We have lain quiescent and permitted the daily promulgation of Orange calumny, fearful of infringing the commands of our sovereign.

"We saw a portion of the English press (but certainly with powers equaling only the dull stupidity of the bird of night) teem forth monstrous libels impeaching our

loyalty. We saw the stall-fed church dignitary raise against us the voice of sectarian intolerance and bigotry; we saw our religion foully traduced and ridiculed and stigmatized, and we were silent, until our enemies were believed; and the Catholics have suffered accordingly.

"But there is a point beyond which experiment becomes dangerous. The Catholics are men—are Irishmen, and feel within their burning breasts the force of natural rights and the injustice of natural oppression. . . . And will you, my countrymen, submit to this bartering of your privileges and liberties? Will you, like torpid slaves, lie under the lash of the oppressor? If we are not free, let us at least prove ourselves worthy of being so."

This was the spirit of the new crusade. It was a declaration of uncompromising war. It aroused the people as they had not been aroused before. No armistice henceforth, no new treaty of Limerick, no compromise, nothing but unqualified and complete emancipation—and until that hour war and nothing but war! The meetings of the association took on something of the importance of a parliament, dividing public interest with the Imperial law makers of Saint Stephens. Here grievances were discussed, wrongs denounced, rights demanded, and business was transacted with the punctiliousness of properly and legally accredited representatives. In the great meetings over the country O'Connell spoke a language that skirted the seditious. He no longer attempted to conciliate—he assailed. He no longer preached peace at any price—he hinted of war. His methods at this time have been criticized as those of a demagogue. If by that it is meant that he talked "down" to the people who would not have understood the language of a debating society —then he was a demagogue. Lecky, in his compara-

tively fair work on O'Connell, loves to characterize his speeches at this time as "mob oratory." As an illustration of his meaning we submit an extract from a speech made in 1824—a speech during the delivery of which he swept the gamut of emotions, arousing the people to a frenzy of enthusiasm, convulsing them with laughter, transmitting to them something of his own burning indignation. He was making the point that England had played Ireland for a clown, conceding rights when the empire was in danger, punishing in days of peace in return for Erin's loyalty in time of trouble.

"In the experimental despotism which England fastened on Ireland," he said, "her mighty appetite for slavery was not gorged; and because our unfortunate country was proximate, and polite in the endurance of the burden so mercilessly imposed, it was inferred that slavery could be safely extended far and wide, and an attempt was therefore made on the American colonies. Despotism, in fact, is an all-craving and voracious animal; increase of appetite grows on what it feeds, until endurance became at length too vile; and the Americans—the great God of Heaven bless them for it (laughter and applause)—shook off the thraldom which a parliament, representing an inglorious and ignominious funding system, had sought to impose. (Cheers.) Oh, it was a noble sight to see them in open battle, contending for their liberties. The recollection of the circumstance cheers and invigorates me in my progress; it gives me an elasticity which all the fatigues of the day can not depress—(cheers)—

> " 'The friends they tried were by their side—
> And the foes they dared before them.'

"Wives animated their husbands to the combat; they bade them contend for their children, for the dear pledges

of their mutual love—(hear, hear)—mothers enjoined their sons to remember those who bore them—the fair sex bade their lovers earn their favors in a 'well foughten field,' and to return arrayed in glory. They did so—God of Heaven forever bless them. (Loud cheering, mingled with laughter.) Thanks to the valor and patriotism of Washington, a name dear to every lover of liberty, the Americans achieved their independence, and Providence spared the instrument to witness it. (Loud applause.)

"The independence of America was the first blush of dawn to the Catholic, after a long and dreary night of degradation. Seventy years had they been in a land of bondage, but, like the chosen people, Providence had watched over them and redeemed them for the service of their country. The same Providence exists now, and why should we despair? (Cheers.)

"In 1778 Holland assumed a threatening aspect and some wise friend (a laugh) whispered into the ear of England, 'Search the rich resources of the Irish heart; give to their arms a stimulus to exertion; delude them with promises if you will, but convert their power into your strength and render them subservient to your purposes.' England took the advice; the meteor flag was unfurled; the Danish, Spanish and Dutch fleets peopled a wide waste of waters; but what of Ireland? Oh, although long neglected, she was faithful in that day of need; fifty thousand seamen were produced in a month; the Volunteers organized; a federate independence was created; and the Catholic cause was debated. But lo! peace came, and gratitude vanished; and justice was not abroad; and obligations remained unrequited; and the Catholics were forgotten.

"Forgotten? No. Acts were passed against them. (Loud and long continued applause.)

"Yes, strange as it may seem, the act taking from them the power to vote at vestries was passed at this time; so if the rectors agreed to build a church, the poor Catholics could not ask, 'Who is to go into it?'—(laughter). Or if, taking cold, he required repairs, they could

not order him fifty shillings to buy window glass (laughter). Next came the French Revolution. That revolution produced some good, but it was not without alloy; it was mingled with much impiety. Liberty and religion were first separated. The experiment was a bad one. It had much of French levity in it and a deal that was much worse. The people of France should have remembered that liberty is the first instinct of a generous religion. (Applause.)

"But I am trespassing on the time of the meeting (no, no, no) and in some measure wandering (go on). Well, I like the subject, and I will go on a little longer. I was saying the French Revolution produced much good. So it did. Dumourier gained the battle of Jemappe—the French crossed the Pyrenees—General Biron was in Italy—England looked benignly on Ireland—it served her interest, it was her policy to do so, and she passed another act in favor of the Irish Catholics—(applause). The Irish were made more thirsty for liberty by the drop that fell on their parched lips—(applause).

"There is not one who hears me who does not mourn in affection, in dress or in heart, for some relative or friend who fell on the field of battle (hear). My own heartstrings were torn asunder by the loss of a beloved brother, the companion of my youth and the offspring of the same loins. A kinsman of mine, too, died at the storming of St. Sebastian. Three times did he mount the breach, and he fell at last, covered with wounds and with glory—(applause). He was as gay and as lovely a youth as ever shed his blood in defense of his country, and fair withal as ever trod the green sward of Erin—(much applause). I can not choose but name him. It was Lieutenant John McConnell, of the Fifty-third Regiment. And what did the relatives of these brave men gain by this? What the Catholics of Ireland? Why, the Marquis of Douro was made Duke of Wellington.

". . . In Ireland we have been blamed for being agitators. I thank my God for being one. Whatever little we have gained, we have gained by agitation, while we

uniformly lose by moderation. The last word is repeated so often that I am sick of it. I wonder some gentlemen do not teach a parrot to repeat it. If we gain nothing by moderation, it costs us something. Our religion is reviled, and we thank the revilers; they spit in our faces, and we paid 'em for it—(laughter and applause). This reminds me of Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*—

"'Fair sir, you spat on me on Wednesday last;
On such a day you called me dog;
And for these courtesies I lend you so much monies.'"

Such was the tenor of the association speeches of O'Connell. It was a new note to England. The praise of the revolutionary action of the Americans had an ominous sound. The pulsating intensity of the people was threatening. Their organization and unification were more perfect than ever before, and Wellington wrote to Peel that civil war would result unless the association should be put down. In February, 1825, the government determined to crush the organization which had become, in the hands of O'Connell, a serious menace. The wildest stories were disseminated over England, among them one to the effect that it was a Popish plot intended for the massacre of the Irish Protestants! When the bill was brought into parliament the Catholics swamped the house with petitions against it, and Lord Brougham exerted his magnificent eloquence against it, but to no avail.

Lord Liverpool, in advocating the bill, charged that the association evaded and nullified the law, and levied an unauthorized tax upon the Catholics. This was a new wrinkle—a voluntary contribution, gladly given, twisted into an extortion of the poor! During the debate O'Connell sat in the gallery of the house—a silent

spectator, looking on contemptuously. The answer of the Irish to this latest insult was an ovation to O'Connell on his return to Dublin. Met by an immense throng, he was escorted to his house in Merriam Square where he delivered a stirring speech from the balcony; and when, a few days later, a meeting was held at Ann Street Chapel, the house was packed five hours before the scheduled time. The liberator appeared on this occasion, defiantly arrayed in the uniform of the association—blue frock with black silk buttons, a black velvet collar, a gilt button on the shoulders, white waistcoat and white trousers.

The spirit would not down. The ghost of the murdered liberties of Ireland could not be laid. The determination of O'Connell could not be thwarted; and hardly had the association been put down when another was formed in such a fashion as not to be amenable to the law. And the fight went on.

There was something of fatality in the stupidity of the government, in those days, that advanced the Catholic cause.

The Catholic Relief bill of 1825 passed the house of commons and while not at all satisfactory, its passage would have done much toward defeating the cause of unqualified emancipation. When it reached the lords, the Duke of York, who must have been as stupid as he was bigoted, in presenting a petition against it, delivered an unconstitutional and indecent speech which resulted in its rejection.

The effect was tremendous. The speech of the duke was printed in letters of gold and hung in the homes of the Orangemen and in public places, and the indignation of the Catholics burst into flame. O'Connell

Darrynane House, the Home of O'Connell

could have asked nothing better. The agitator made the most of his opportunity in a speech on the rejection; and in referring to a peculiarly obnoxious utterance of the Marquis of Anglesea, he gave the statesman of Saint Stephens a start:

"He said now is the time to fight. But, most noble marquis, we are not going to fight at all, and above all things, most noble marquis, we are not going to fight now under favor. This may be your time to fight—you may want us to fight ere long with you, as you wanted us before—your glories, and your medals, and your dignities, and your titles, were bought by the young blood of Catholic Ireland. We fought, Marquis of Anglesea, and you know it well—we fought and you are marquis; but if we had not fought with you, your island of Anglesea would ere this have sunk into a cabbage garden. And where would now have been the mighty conqueror of Europe; he who had talent to command victory, and judgment to look for services, and not creed to reward men for merits and not for professions of faith; where would he have been if Ireland had not stood with you? I myself have worn, not only the trappings of woe, but the emblems of sincere mourning, for more than one gallant relative of mine who have shed their blood under your commands. We can fight—we will fight when England wants us. But we will not fight against her *at present,* and I trust we will not fight for her at all until she does us justice.

"But, most noble marquis, though your soldiers fought gallantly and well with you, in a war which they were told was just and necessary, are you quite sure the soldiers will fight in a crusade against the unarmed and wretched peasantry of Ireland? Your speech is published; it will, when read in Armagh and the neighboring counties, give joy, and will be celebrated in the next Orange procession; and again, as before, Catholic blood will be shed; but, most noble marquis, the earth has not

covered all the blood that has been so shed; it cries yet to heaven for vengeance, and not to man; that blood may yet bring on an unfortunate hour of retribution; and if it do, what have you to fight with? Count you on a gallant army?

"Let me tell you this story, Sir. I am but an humble individual. It happened to me, not many months ago, to be going through England; my family were in a carriage, on the box of which I was placed; there came up, on the road, eight or ten sergeants and corporals with two hundred and fifty recruits. I perceived at once the countenances of my unfortunate countrymen laughing as they went along, for no other reason than because they were alive. They saw me, and some of them recognized me; they instantly burst from their sergeants and corporals, formed round my carriage, and gave me three cheers, most noble marquis. Well, may God bless them, wherever they are, poor fellows. Oh, you reckon without your host, let me tell you, when you think that a British army will trample on a set of petitioners for their rights—beggars for a little charity, who are looking up to you with eyes lifted and hands bent down. You will not fight us now, most noble marquis; and let me tell you, if the battle comes, you shall not have the choice of your position, either."

This daring warning emanating from the hated agitator sent chills down the spines of the government officials and made a profound impression upon the Irish people. O'Connell had dared to keep the people reminded of the methods by which the Americans had won their independence, and had blessed the rebels for their rebellion. He had dared press upon the Irish the patent fact that they had been fighting English battles and receiving, as reward for their blood, oppressive legislation. He now dared throw out the suggestion that the red coats themselves covered too many

Irish hearts to make an appeal to arms against the Irish safe. But this was mere oratory.

In the autumn of 1825 O'Connell determined to give the English a practical manifestation of his power. There was an election in Waterford where the Beresfords had long been lords of the soil and masters of their tenants. The miserable serfs had voted under the lash of their masters. They had voted to parliament the enemies of their cause—because they dare not do otherwise. In 1825 Lord George Beresford announced his candidacy—and O'Connell audaciously determined to challenge his pretensions. The agitator went down to Waterford and in a two-hours speech aroused the spirit and pride of the tenants. Another candidate was brought out, and Lord Beresford was treated to the unique shock of an overwhelming defeat in his own bailiwick. The effect was magical. England began to understand that behind the words of O'Connell, men were massed. Better still, the long subjugated Irish began to realize that their liberation was in their own hands. This was the beginning of the end.

In 1828 when the Duke of Wellington went into office, and Fitzgerald, the member for Clare, accepted the position of president of the board of trade, he was compelled to return to his people for re-election. The Catholic association had previously determined to oppose the election of any Irish member who accepted office under the Wellington régime. A prominent Tory, Sir David Rose, either drawing upon his own imagination or acting upon an idle rumor, met Fitzgerald on the street and suggested that O'Connell might run against him. The idea seemed prepos-

terous. The oath was prohibitive against a Catholic and no one of the Catholic faith had stood for parliament since the far-off days when all the members of the commons were of the Roman faith. Then again Fitzgerald, while in parliament, had acted with far more decency toward the Catholics than the vast majority in the house, and was, consequently, not unpopular among them. In addition to all that, he was a man of ability and an ideal landlord. However the suggestion alarmed him and he approached O'Connell. It was the first intimation of such a thing that had come to him. He had not thought of running; nor did he look at first with favor upon the project. Then an inspiration struck him. Why not? Had not the time come to assert the claims of the Catholics to a seat in parliament? Would not a test force—the issue?

That very night the editor of the *Dublin Post,* with whom O'Connell had not been on friendly terms, was startled to see the agitator enter his sanctum, hold forth his hand with the exclamation, "Let us be friends," and announce his candidacy for Clare. In an instant all enmity was forgotten. The candidate sat down in the office of the *Post* and dashed off his address to the people. That night Dublin was wild with excitement. The announcement of O'Connell almost smacked of revolution. The next day all Ireland was seething. Across the channel the English threw up their hands in holy horror. The association buckled on the armor and prepared for battle. Funds were immediately subscribed. Accompanied by Sheil, the officers of the association, and the celebrated Father Murphy, O'Connell drove from Dublin in a

carriage with four horses on his way to the scene of conflict. The citizens gave him an ovation as he drove through the streets. "May God bless you—may you succeed," shouted the people. The contest was exceedingly bitter. The aristocracy and the landlords resorted to their old methods of intimidation without success. One possessor of a great estate met O'Connell in the street, a brace of pistols in his pockets. "By G—, O'Connell," he exclaimed passionately, "if you canvass one of my tenants I'll shoot you." With an expansive smile the agitator replied, "By G—, I'll canvass every one of them"—and he did, and he captured them. Father Murphy and Sheil made passionate appeals to the tenantry to assert their manhood. The result was astounding. O'Connell was triumphantly returned.

The effect was magical. The Irish people were intoxicated with their success, and even the military made no effort to restrain their enthusiasm. The authorities confidently expected a revolution. The Marquis of Anglesea had seven thousand soldiers in readiness but he was careful to keep them concealed. The fact that O'Connell was followed by thousands on the way back to Dublin did not minimize the fear. In London the indignation was intense. A Protestant club was immediately formed. The lord lieutenant wrote back to London that he would undertake to maintain order for a year—no longer. In one day two thousand meetings were held in Ireland. Religious feeling ran high. The Marquis of Anglesea issued a proclamation to put down disturbances in the north, and O'Connell followed with a proclamation to put down disturbances

in the south. Already he was called "King Dan." He was the master of Ireland—the commander-in-chief of four million men.

He made no attempt to take his seat but made free use of his franking privileges. But the issue was drawn—and had to be met—and Wellington bowed to the inevitable. The Emancipation bill was quickly passed, and on April thirteenth, 1829, it was presented to the king for his signature. It was like passing him some quinine on a spoon. As he took up his pen he exclaimed in childish petulance:

"The Duke of Wellington is king of England, O'Connell is king of Ireland, and I suppose I am only dean of Windsor."

And he signed it!

In glancing over the bill the king found some ointment for his wounded feelings—it contained a spiteful clause to the effect that no Catholic should sit in parliament unless elected after the passage of the bill.

Notwithstanding the clause, O'Connell determined to claim his seat. But while his speech at the bar of the house was an unanswerable legal argument, expressed in the most irreproachable language, and made a profound impression upon the distinguished English company that packed the house and galleries, he was refused the seat to which the people had elected him.

Another stupid blunder—it only intensified the loyalty of his followers, and when he issued his second address to the people of Clare and journeyed back to the country he was acclaimed a hero, and received everywhere as a conqueror. Towns were illuminated. Thousands thronged and surged around him. He was drawn into Clare in a triumphal car and returned with-

out a contest. Worn with the struggle, the liberator then turned happily toward his beloved Darrynane to reflect among the rugged mountains, and on the white shore of the sea, on the future struggle for the repeal of the union, to which he stood pledged to the people of Ireland.

VI

O'Connell carried to the imperial parliament an international reputation. In every Catholic country in the world his name had become all but a household word. It is illuminative of his status to know that when the Belgians elected their king three votes were cast for the Irish liberator. The people of France, especially in political circles, were frankly curious about him, and his name and achievements were common topics in Parisian salons. Among his colleagues in the house he was both admired and hated. The majority of those who had been forced to vote for the Relief bill could not forgive the man who had compelled them to swallow their prejudices and cast a vote for toleration. Nor could the average Englishman forget that he was an Irishman—and we shall see that O'Connell had no intention of permitting them to forget it. The king hated him with all the ferocity of a coarse nature. His majesty habitually spoke of him as "that damn O'Connell."

It must not be thought, however, that his powers were underestimated or that he numbered among his admirers no members of the house of commons or the lords. Lord Palmerson characterized his election to the house, and his audacity in making the bolt for it, as "sublime." John Bright, while differing from him

on many subjects, entertained the deepest respect for him—a respect which was increased by the liberator's uncompromising opposition to human slavery. Benjamin Disraeli, then young and inexperienced, but consumed by an inordinate ambition, set himself the task of cultivating O'Connell. While concentrating his attention largely upon legislation affecting Ireland, he entered earnestly into all parliamentary battles for the amelioration of the condition of the oppressed, and his speeches in favor of universal suffrage, parliamentary reform, law reform, the emancipation of the Jews, and the abolition of capital punishment forced upon his enemies the realization of the breadth of his statesmanship.

And all the while O'Connell had in view one single thing—the repeal of the act of union, and the restoration of Grattan's parliament in Dublin. During the first years of his parliamentary career he refrained from a precipitate attempt to force his views upon his hostile colleagues, and exerted himself to restrain the impatience of his countrymen. In truth the spirit he had aroused in a long apologetic people during the progress of the fight for emancipation would not down. The Marquis of Anglesea, the lord lieutenant of Ireland, in an effort to quell the disturbances of the times issued no less than four proclamations within a month in 1830, putting down repeal breakfasts, and in the spring of the following year the government committed the stupid blunder of arresting O'Connell in his own house for holding "illegal meetings." Nothing came of the arrest, but the fact that it had been made did not operate as a harmonizer in Ireland.

It was not until 1833 that O'Connell found the op-

portunity he sought of forcing the commons to listen to a recital of the brutalities and butcheries practised in Ireland in the administration of the government. The debate on the Coercion act of that year was bitter and brilliantly conducted, and while pitted against such masters as Peel, Stanley, Macaulay and Brougham, the champion of Ireland created a profound impression by the boldness with which he traced the outrages in his country to the cold-blooded brutality of the governmental policy. "You gave the peasants stone for bread, and martial law for justice," he thundered at Sir Robert Peel. "You have brains of lead, hearts of stone and fangs of iron," he shouted at the Whigs. Turning to the ministers he declared that their bill was "bottomed on the most glaring and notorious falsehoods." He denounced the suspension of the habeas corpus act and the proposal to turn the accused in Ireland over to the tender and intelligent mercies of a military tribunal as infinitely worse than the practises which had resulted in the American revolution. He never permitted the English to forget that revolution.

In his fight on the Coercion bill O'Connell did not content himself with a mere exposé of the infamies of the measure, but with rare parliamentary generalship he obstructed its progress at every stage, and furnished a precedent that was to be an inspiration to Parnell on a similar occasion years later. The bill passed—but there could be no hypocritical pretension on the part of the English public that the nature of the bill was misunderstood.

The following year the liberator was forced by an insistent public opinion he could not withstand to bring forward a motion for the repeal of the union at a time

when nothing could possibly have been accomplished. He was on the ground and understood the situation, but the impatient repealers of Ireland were determined upon immediate action. The motion was consequently brought in, overwhelmingly lost, and the cause of repeal was set back by at least nine years.

The liberator determined, on the defeat of his motion, never again to be forced into action against his own judgment. He understood now that time alone could remedy the wrongs of years through constitutional methods.

The following year the general election took place and O'Connell, now bent upon making the Irish people an essential factor in English politics, by punishing the Tories for the passage of the Coercion bill, threw himself passionately into the contest in Ireland and urged the Irishmen in the manufacturing centers of England to support the Whigs. The result was the overthrow of the Peel ministry and the semi-alliance between the Whigs and O'Connell. This countenancing of the Whigs on the part of the liberator was one of the underlying causes of the defection of Young Ireland a few years later. In the light of history, however, O'Connell must be credited with having made a fairly good bargain for his country without having stipulated anything for himself. An historic meeting was held at the home of Lord John Russell between the leaders of the Whig party and the liberator, and a working arrangement was made. The result was that O'Connell was practically permitted to name the law officers in Ireland and to exercise the power of veto over any obnoxious name proposed for the lord lieutenantship.

The moment the public learned of the conference at Lord John Russell's the Tories undertook to embarrass the ministry of Lord Melbourne—the Whig prime minister—by disseminating the story that it had been forced to make humiliating terms with the hated O'Connell. At the earliest opportunity Lord Alvanley interrogated Melbourne as to whether he had arranged for "the powerful aid of O'Connell and his party," and upon receiving a diplomatic denial, he congratulated the ministry upon the absence of an alliance. Lord Liverpool also participated in this polite whipping of the Irish leader. During the episode O'Connell held his peace, but on the following day he found an opportunity to repay the two peers with a vengeance when a bewhiskered member, in speaking of the ministry, and its prompter and sponsor, O'Connell, said that he did "not like the countenance of the gentleman opposite." At this O'Connell rose and in his most sarcastic manner said:

"I admire the good humor with which the gallant colonel has made his observations, and although there might be something very remarkable in the countenances of gentlemen on this side of the house, yet I think the gallant colonel's countenance, at all events, is as remarkable as any upon the ministerial benches. I will not abate him a single hair in point of good humor. It is pleasant, Sir, to have these things discussed in the good temper and with the politeness which characterized the gallant colonel. Elsewhere they may be treated in a different style. Those considered, by the resolution of this house, as unfit to hold office, may presume to talk of the Irish representatives in a manner highly unbecoming any member, exceedingly indecent; an indecency that would be insufferable if it were not ridiculous. There is not a

creature, not even a half maniac or a half idiot, that may not take upon himself to use that language there which he would know better than to make use of elsewhere. And the bloated buffoon ought to learn the distinction between independent men and those whose votes are not worth purchasing, even if they were in the market."

The "half maniac" and "half idiot" was understood to apply to Liverpool, while "bloated buffoon" was accepted as an accurate description of Alvanley.

Nothing more serious resulted from the use of this language than an unsuccessful attempt on the part of Liverpool to have O'Connell expelled from the Brooks Club. The spirit in which the liberator met the sneers of comparatively stupid English statesmen served to popularize him with the English masses, and about this time he became something of a power in the great manufacturing centers. Henceforth we shall find him giving a general support to the Melbourne ministry, battling on every occasion for Ireland, sometimes voting against the Whigs, but openly determined to give them an opportunity to demonstrate their capacity properly to govern Ireland. During 1837 and 1838 he took a foremost part in the debates on the Irish Corporation Reform bill, and assuming such an authoritative attitude that Londonderry declared him "more dictatorial and impudent than ever," only to receive in reply a characterization as "a snivelling, yelling part of a pack without a huntsman." In 1838 he was entertained at a banquet at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in London, and in the course of his speech, in referring to the faults of the Irish Reform bill, he said that in the house of commons Ireland was not safe "from the perjury of English and Scotch gentlemen."

This gave his enemies another chance to discredit him with the house and the matter was brought to the attention of the commons. They, who expected an apology, reckoned without their host.

"I express no regret," he said. "I retract nothing. I repent nothing. I do not desire unnecessarily to use hard or offensive language. I wish I could find terms less objectionable and equally significant, but I can not. I am bound to reassert what I asserted."

In uttering this defiance he confidently expected to be sent to the tower, but the Tories were as cowardly as they were offensive.

It was in the year of this incident that O'Connell announced his Irish program—corporate reform, an extension of the franchise, a due proportion of representation, and freedom from the necessity of supporting the Protestant church. This program he offered as an alternative to the devotion of the remainder of his life to the cause of repeal. There can be no doubt but that O'Connell looked upon the Whigs as friends of Ireland and believed that they could be depended upon to right at least some of the Irish wrongs. He was willing to wait and give them the chance. The enormous influence he wielded with his own people was manifested in his ability to persuade them to join him in this waiting policy. Speaking to the people of Dublin in 1836, he said:

"I go to England to work out justice to Ireland. If I get that justice do you consent that I shall abandon repeal? I put that question to the people of Kerry, and I got an answer in the affirmative. I put the same ques-

tion at Tuam and I got the same reply. I put the same question at Moate, and I got the same reply. I put it also to the honest men of the Queens county, and they gave me the same answer. I now put that question to you. I want you to strengthen me with your authority, that I may go and tell the English people that I am authorized to make that bargain with them."

With the people of Ireland behind him on this proposition of a peaceful solution of the Irish problem he went over to England and repeated his proposition at great meetings at Liverpool, Worcester and Warwick. At Liverpool he said:

"We have stood by you in your contests, and we are ready to do so again. When the meteor flag of England was borne forward to victory, amidst slaughter, death and carnage of thousands—when shouts of triumph have issued from British decks—and they have done so for a thousand years and will do so for a thousand more—when they have been heard on the battle plain and o'er the vasty deep—when the stream of British blood flowed in fullest tide to British glory and British fame, did the life current of the sons of Ireland flow less copiously or less warmly in the cause than yours—yours whose dearer rights were battled for? We want to be your brothers and stand by your side. What—are you to have all the spoils of victory and we nothing but the blows? Forbid it, English honor and English interests. There are many things to be done for you yet. Your corporate reform bill requires to be amended. Here we are. Your franchise requires to be extended. Here we are. Your honest and industrious classes require to be protected by the ballot; and here we are."

It might have been thought that with Ireland taking such a position through her chief spokesman that England would have been persuaded to alter her policy

toward the Irish people, and have gladly availed herself of the opportunity to conciliate the subjugated race and reconcile it to the union. It was the hope of O'Connell. And yet even while he was offering the olive branch, we find parliament persisting in the policy which could not do otherwise than reawaken the demand for the repeal of the union. An illustration of the spirit which met O'Connell's peace propositions may be given in connection with the discussion following the mysterious murder of the notorious Lord Norbury, who presided with such brutality at the trial of Robert Emmet. A Mr. Shaw, representing Dublin, and a poor Irishman, moved for a return on the outrages in Ireland. O'Connell's reply was bitter, and the spirit of the house may be gathered from the nature of the interruptions:

"Speeches have been made by four gentlemen, natives of Ireland, who, it would appear, come here for the sole purpose of vilifying their native land, and endeavoring to prove that it is the worst and most criminal country on the face of the earth. (Loud cries of 'oh' from the Tories.) Yes, to come here to calumniate the country that gave them birth. It is said that there are some soils that produce enormous and crawling creatures—things odious and disgusting. (Loud cheers from the Tories.) Yes, you who cheer—there you are—can you deny it? Are you not calumniators? (Hisses.) Oh, you hiss, but you can not sting. I rejoice in my native land; I rejoice that I belong to it; your slanders can not diminish my regard for it; your malevolence can not blacken it in my estimation; and though your vices and crimes have driven its people to outrage and murder—(cries of 'Order')—yes, I say your vices and crimes—('Chair, chair'). Well then, the crimes of men like you have produced these results. . . . Fourteen murders have

occurred in Ireland since the sixteenth of February. England since that period has presented twenty-five; yet no English member has arisen to exclaim 'What an abominable country is mine. What shocking people are the people of England.'"

Toward the latter part of his experiment with English justice the Irish Municipal bill, which had passed the commons, was returned from the lords miserably emasculated. Nothing could have been more fatal to the "experiment." In a burst of indignation O'Connell exclaimed in the house:

"Neither the noble duke nor your minority shall ever be permitted to trample upon Ireland with impunity. In the name of the Irish people I give you this defiance. Do you think that I mock when I talk to you? I tell you if you refuse to do justice to us, we are able to do justice to ourselves. I have given up the agitation of the question of the repeal of the union, and now see what an argument you have given me in support of it."

Some time before the downfall of the Melbourne ministry and the accession of the Tories to power under the leadership of Sir Robert Peel, the liberator was convinced that justice would never be done to Ireland until she forced the repeal of the union. While it is difficult to understand how he was imposed upon by Whig pretensions so long, it is but fair to assume that he clung tenaciously to the hope that the party to which he had given a certain support would right the ancient wrongs of Ireland. Perhaps his personal relationship with some of the leaders of the party may have unconsciously affected his judgment; possibly he merely hesitated to acknowledge that he had been de-

ceived. The people of Ireland had authorized the experiment but they had long since tired of it. The spirit of revolt was once more in the air. The demand that the liberator lead them in an onslaught on the union was insistent. That this demand was music to his ears we have reasons to believe. Toward the latter part of the Melbourne ministry, in speaking to the National Union at Dublin, he said:

"Oh, let us for a moment contemplate the scene on the day when we shall turn out the money changers from the beautiful edifice, in which our parliament sat before, and in which it will sit again; that day when the streets will be crowded with free Irishmen whose shouts for liberty will rend the air; when every window will produce a galaxy of native loveliness; and when the noble and high-spirited youth of Ireland will stand in the streets of our beautiful city shouting liberty, independence, peace and tranquillity for Ireland—(loud cheers)—and when the speaker of the house of commons shall again take his seat, I will claim the privilege—perhaps it may be vanity—of moving the address—(tremendous cheering). I have indulged in the anticipation of this glorious day while gazing upon the vast Atlantic. For I love the wild beauties of nature; and I have but just come from my native mountains, where I walked abroad amid the most magnificent scenery in the world; and where I listened to the voice of nature, as if speaking to eternity, in the mighty waves which broke innocuously upon the iron-bound cliffs of my native shore. There I heard the mountain stream, as if whispering, in a still soft voice, 'Now is the time to strain every nerve for Ireland's regeneration, when her sons have forgot the bad passions which have so long kept them enslaved by setting them against each other.' Seven hundred years have now rolled on since the first hostile foot of the Saxon and the stranger polluted your lovely soil; but the time is come when the sons of Ireland, in peaceable but irre-

sistible strength, bound together by chains of love, become in their union too strong for bondage, and walk abroad in the full enjoyment of liberty—(long continued applause). I want no triumph; I only ask that all Irishmen shall be bound in a link of brotherly love; and that once accomplished, I anticipate a higher delight—when, in the words of the poet, I can say—

" 'Look through nature, through the range
Of planets, suns and adamantine spheres,
Whirling unshaken through the void immense,
And speak, oh man, can this capacious scene
With half that kindling majesty dilate
My strong conception, as when Brutus rose
Amidst the crowd of patriots—and his arm upflung
Like immortal Jove, when guilt brings down the thunder
Called on Tully's name and bade the father of his country, hail.'

"I quit Rome and return to my native land; for lo! the union's prostrate in the dust, and Ireland again is free."

Thus, after his fair experiment, the mind of O'Connell recurred to his original idea. His first public utterance had been in protest against the consummation of the union. Throughout the long struggle for Catholic emancipation the repeal was the underlying thought. It was with the idea of ultimate repeal that he had entered parliament. He had satisfied himself that if Ireland was ever again to stand forth a free nation, it would not be through any concessions of an English parliament, but because the Irish people arose in the majesty of their might and forced their rights from a reluctant and traditional oppressor. His ten years in parliament had not been entirely lean years. He had accomplished much. But after all, the name

O'Connell is not popularly associated with his parliamentary career. His place was out among the people, under the canopy of the heavens, arousing them with his splendid eloquence, and leading them on, in peaceful revolution, to the righting of their wrongs. He had played fair with England—and England had not played fair with him. He had given her the chance to put down the agitation for the repeal of the union by simply doing justice—and she had spurned the chance. Once more the liberator heard the call of his people—once more responded. And we shall now behold him —swaying a nation in the succession of marvelous meetings that surpass anything the world has ever known.

VII

On April fifteenth, 1840, a few gentlemen met at the Corn Exchange in Dublin and founded the Repeal Association. The hour set for the meeting arrived and scarcely a handful of men were present. There was a wait of an hour—and but few more put in an appearance. The beginning of the most spectacular movement in the history of Ireland was inauspicious. The failure of the people to take fire in the beginning was born of the conviction of the younger element that bullets rather than ballots would be necessary. Only the magnetic, over-powering personality of O'Connell could have prevailed over the sense of hopelessness with which the masses had begun to look upon constitutional agitation. But O'Connell prevailed.

In the autumn of 1840 he began the series of mon-

ster meetings that were to convert the island into a seething mass of revolutionary men. Almost from the beginning the people were aflame. The entire population was on the march. The nation was moving, amid the waving of banners, the burning of incense, the martial music of bands, the procession of pageants, toward its coronation. In the beginning the English press tried to dismiss the new movement with a smile. The *London Examiner* compared it to the cry of the Darrynane beagles. The reply of O'Connell struck a popular chord—"Yes, but he made a better hit than he intended, for my beagles never cry until they catch their game."

The first of the spectacular meetings was held at Cork. On his way the carriage of the liberator was met by thousands of wildly excited and jubilant men of the red-blood type who attempted to take the horses from the carriage and draw him into the city. "No, no," cried O'Connell, "I will never let you men do the business of horses if I can help it. Don't touch that harness, you vagabonds. I am trying to elevate your position, and I will not permit you to degrade yourselves." A hearty laugh from the crowd—and the carriage drove on surrounded by the cheering thousands. The meeting was held at Batty's circus. The enthusiasm was tremendous. The movement gained in velocity.

The agitator proceeded to Limerick. Here he was met with another army one hundred thousand strong —red-blooded men. The working classes took upon themselves the arrangements. The ship carpenters got up a picturesque pageant. They arranged a boat, on wheels, and, within the boat sat Neptune with his

trident, arrayed in a sea green costume. On the approach of the liberator Neptune rose, and amid the acclamations of the seething multitude delivered an address to which O'Connell smilingly replied that he "felt refreshed by receiving an aquatic compliment on the dusty highroad." The procession moved on—all Limerick, men, women and children, moved on—to Cruise's hotel, where O'Connell delivered a stirring speech. His speeches during this period were calculated to appeal to the patriotic pride and sentiment of the people—eulogies of the land of their fathers, tributes to its beauty of hill and vale and stream, comments upon the contrast between the fertility of its soil and the distress of its people, and all the evils of the country were traced in bold defiant language to English rule. He reached their hearts with Moore's melodies. He aroused their passions with the violated treaty of Limerick. He touched their pride with pictures of Grattan's parliament. After the meeting at the hotel, O'Connell and his party proceeded gravely to the treaty stone where speeches were made. This was holding up to the maddened throng the garments of Cæsar pierced with the daggers of traitors.

The first monster meeting excited the emulation of other cities. The orator passed on to Ennis, where he addressed fifty thousand men; and a little later on to Kilkenny, where two hundred thousand people greeted him as a conqueror—as a liberator. Here there was a suggestion of the possibilities of the agitation when twenty thousand men on horseback, the Repeal Cavalry, rode through the streets, and stood sentinel while O'Connell spoke. Here O'Connell made his appeal to the religious character of the masses:

"Your priesthood were hunted and put to death," he said, "yet your hierarchy has remained unbroken—a noble monument of your faith and piety. The traveler who wanders over eastern deserts beholds the majestic temples of Baalbec or Palmyra, which rear their proud columns to the heavens in the midst of solitude and desolation. Such is the church in Ireland. In the midst of our political desolation, a sacred Palmyra has ever remained to us."

Thus he hurried from one triumph to another, a trail of flame, creating a conflagration everywhere—driving the timid to cover, calling the brave to battle. Speaking to hundreds of thousands by word of mouth he reached the millions through the press through his traveling companions, Doctor Gray, of *The Freeman's Journal,* and Richard Barret, of *The Pilot.*

And all the while he held these millions in the hollow of his hand. They were not marshaled in columns, but they were no mob. He constituted every Irishman a committee of one to keep the peace. When some disturbances occurred at Limerick, he hastily despatched a messenger to that city, bearing a white flag edged with green upon which was inscribed, "Whoever commits a crime adds strength to the enemy." He reiterated this message a thousand times. The crusade of Father Matthew made it possible to assemble hundreds of thousands without incurring the slightest risk of danger.

In the early part of 1841 the enemies of Ireland began to move. Their plan contemplated the assassination of the liberator. It was intended to murder him on the way to Belfast. He was notified of his danger. He ordered post horses all along the road from Dublin for one day under his own, and two days ear-

lier he ordered horses under an assumed name. He went two days earlier and escaped the murderer's steel. Arriving at Belfast he was given a soiree by five hundred ladies. The gallant enemy stoned the building, breaking the windows, smashing the chandeliers and injuring one woman. It was not the first time that the enemies of Ireland had made war on women and children.

On another occasion it was planned to meet O'Connell's constitutional agitation with assassination. It was intended to meet him on the road, to surround his carriage and shoot him. Leaving the carriage he crossed the fields and escaped.

Unable to assassinate with bullet or steel, England made an attempt upon his reputation. The people of Ireland were again contributing to the success of the movement through the payment of rent to O'Connell, and he was accused of playing upon the patriotism of the people for mercenary motives. The attack was venomous but it disgusted even the decent people of England. Lord Greville, in his *Memoirs,* in referring to these attacks, has said: "His dependence on his country's bounty in the rent that was levied for so many years was alike honorable to the contributors and the recipient. It was an income nobly given and nobly earned."

These brutal attacks upon his life and reputation only steeled the arm of the liberator. He began to verge on the seditious with his defiance. At one of the great meetings he said:

"We are eight millions—there is another million of Irishmen in England; there are Irishmen not forgetful of their country in the English army. We shall make

no rebellion, we wish no civil war, we shall keep on the ground of the constitution so long as we are allowed to do so; but if Peel forces on a contest, if he invades the constitutional rights of the Irish people—then *væ victis* between the contending parties. Where is the coward who would not die for such a land as Ireland? Have not Irishmen the ordinary courage of Englishmen? Are they to be treated as slaves? Will they submit to being trampled under foot? They shall never trample me under their feet; if they do so it shall be my dead body."

Learning of this tone in the liberator's speeches, the press of England began to hint of armed forces being despatched to Ireland, in articles intimating that the power of steam had put Ireland within the grasp of England. At the first opportunity O'Connell replied:

"They threaten us with troops by steam. They say that a few hours will land an army here. Steam is a powerful foe—but steam is an equally powerful friend. Whisper it in your ear, John Bull, steam has brought America within ten days' sail of Ireland."

Once more—America!

The movement gained an impetus during the year 1842 and O'Connell announced that 1843 would be the banner year. The association was then formed into three sections—the members, the associates and the Volunteers. The card issued to the Volunteers was designed by O'Callaghan, of The Green Book. It was a challenge. It was as wine to the people of Ireland —a red flag to John Bull. It contained the names of the four great battles in which the Irish defeated the Danes. This was calculated to arouse the martial pride of a martial race. It was designed with two

columns. On the shaft of one were the significant words:

"Ireland contains thirty-two thousand two hundred and one geographical square miles. It is larger than Portugal by four thousand six hundred and forty-nine miles; larger than Bavaria and Saxony by four thousand four hundred and seventy-three miles; larger than Naples and Sicily by four hundred and nine miles; larger than Hanover, the Papal States and Tuscany by one thousand two hundred and eighty-five miles; larger than Denmark, Hesse, Darmstadt and the Electorate of the Hess by nine thousand six hundred and nine miles; larger than Greece and Switzerland by five thousand five hundred and sixty-five miles; larger than Holland and Belgium by thirteen thousand and sixty-five miles; it is in population superior to eighteen, and in extent of territory superior to fifteen European states—and has not a parliament."

On another column was the inscription:

"Ireland has eight million seven hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants; has a yearly income of five million pounds; exports nearly eighteen million pounds' worth of produce; sends yearly (after paying government expenses) to England two million five hundred thousand pounds; remits yearly to absentees five million pounds; supplied during the last great war against France the general, two-thirds of the men and officers of the English army and navy; and has a military population of two million—and has not a parliament."

England finally became alarmed. All Ireland was "up." The millions were on the march. O'Connell was speaking to audiences of hundreds of thousands at a time. The opposition to the ministry in the English parliament interrogated Sir Robert Peel as to whether

he proposed to suppress the movement. The prime minister replied that he would if he could. There had been no lawlessness; no drunkenness at the monster meetings; no sedition; no injuries—but the prime minister would suppress a constitutional agitation if he could! The impudence of the reply aroused the fighting blood of O'Connell, and he tauntingly replied in a public speech:

"We are told that some desperate measures are to be taken for the suppression of public opinion upon the question of repeal. I will tell Peel where he may find a suggestion for his bill. In the American Congress for the District of Columbia they have passed a law that the house shall not receive any petitions from, nor any petitions on behalf of, slaves, even though the petitioners be freemen. I shall send for a copy of that act of the Columbian legislature and send it to Peel, that he may take it as his model when he is framing his bill for the coercion of the Irish people. He shall go the full length of the Coercion bill if he stirs at all."

And the monster meetings became more frequent and more immense. About this time occurred the marvelous meeting at Tara—the seat of the ancient kings. There was something inspiring in the scene. It was a hot August day. Although fifty miles from Dublin, it has been estimated that one thousand four hundred vehicles went out from Dublin alone. The roads leading to Tara were crowded. It was one Sunday, a holiday for the church, and the enthusiasm of the marching nation—for it was a marching nation—was intense. Not a drunken man was seen among the thousands. Not a quarrel took place. Not a fight marred the solemnity of the occasion. Men, women

and children marched, drove and rode in perfect safety on the way to the crowning of King Dan. Bands played patriotic airs. Temporary altars were built along the road at frequent intervals where masses were celebrated. The odor of incense mingled with the odor of the trees. Now and then a sermon was preached on temperance. Father Matthew was marching hand in hand with the liberator. The dignitaries of the church were in attendance.

When he ascended the platform, O'Connell looked out over a wondrous sea of humanity—stretching all around him, and back, far back, beyond the reach of the human voice, to where features were blurred by the distance. Over a million men, women and children stood at Tara on that memorable day. The *London Times* placed the number at a million—and the *Times* didn't exaggerate in favor of the Irish. The scene was witnessed by one who had the capacity to transfer it to a canvas that can not fade. Bulwer's description is the best that has come down to us:

"Once to my sight the giant thus was given,
Walled by wide air, and roofed by boundless heaven:
Beneath his feet the human ocean lay,
And wave on wave flowed into space away.
Methought no clarion could have sent its sound
E'en to the center of the hosts around;
And, as I thought, rose the sonorous swell,
As from some church spire swings the silvery bell;
Aloft and clear from airy tide to tide
It glided easy as a bird may glide.
To the last verge of that vast audience sent,
It played with each wild passion as it went:
Now stirred the uproar—now the murmur stilled,
And sobs or laughter answered as it willed.

Then did I know what swells of infinite choice
To rouse or lull was the sweet human voice.
Then did I learn to seize the sudden clue
To the grand troublous life antique—to view
Under the rock-stand of Demosthenes
Mutable Athens heave her noisy seas."

On the outskirts of the multitude where the voice of the orator could scarcely be heard, his gestures were understood, and the people who could not hear stood still in perfect silence—awed by the mere sight of the speaker.

A little later occurred the monster meeting at Mullaghmast, where four hundred thousand people assembled. It was here that Hogan, the sculptor, crowned the liberator while the thousands shouted themselves hoarse. There was no mistaking O'Connell's meaning on this occasion:

"At Mullaghmast," he said, "we are on the precise spot where English treachery — aye, and false Irish treachery, too—consummated a massacre that has never been imitated save in the massacre of the Mamelukes by Mahomet Ali. It was necessary to have Turks atrocious enough to commit a crime equal to that perpetrated by Englishmen. But do not think that the massacre at Mullaghmast was a question between Protestants and Catholics—it was no such thing. The murdered persons were, to be sure, Catholics, but a great number of the murderers were also Catholics, and Irishmen, because there were then, as well as now, many Catholics who were traitors to Ireland. But we have now this advantage—that we have many honest Protestants joining us —joining us heartily in hand and heart, for old Ireland and liberty. I thought this a fit and becoming spot to celebrate, in the open day, our unanimity in declaring our determination not to be misled by any treachery—there

shall be no bargain, no compromise with England—we shall take nothing but repeal, and a parliament in College Green. You will never by my advice confide in any false hopes they hold out to you; never confide in anything coming from them, or cease from your struggle, no matter what promise may be held out to you, until you hear me say I am satisfied; and I will tell you where I will say that—near the statue of King William in College Green. No, we came here to express our determination to die to a man, if necessary, in the cause of old Ireland. We came to take advice of each other, and above all I believe you came here to take my advice. I can tell you I have the game in my hand—I have triumph secure—I have repeal certain, if you but obey my advice."

The multitude cheered wildly at this promise of victory. The orator surveyed the hundreds of thousands, and then cautioned them to permit him to move slowly. He never in any of his speeches lost sight of the danger of precipitate action. Nor did he forget to play to the pride of the people. His tribute to the men of Kildare was similar to the tribute he had for every community:

"Oh, how delighted I was in the scenes that I witnessed as I came along here to-day. How my heart throbbed, how my spirit was elevated, how my bosom swelled with delight at the multitude which I beheld, and which I shall behold, in the stalwart and strong men of Kildare. I was delighted at the activity and force that I saw around me, and my old heart grew warm again in admiring the beauty of the dark-eyed maids and matrons of Kildare. Oh, there is a starlight sparkling from the eye of a Kildare beauty that is scarcely equaled, that could not be excelled, all over the world. And remember that you are the sons, the fathers, the brothers and the husbands of such women, and a traitor and a coward could never be connected with any of them. Yes, I am in a county

remarkable in the history of Ireland for its bravery and its misfortune, for its credulity in the faith of others, for its people judged of the Saxon by the honesty and honor of their own natures. I am in a county celebrated for the sacredness of its shrines and fanes. I am in a county where the lamp of Kildare's holy shrine burned with its sacred fire, through ages of darkness and storm —that fire which for six centuries burned before the high altar without being extinguished, being fed continuously, without the slightest interruption, and it seemed to me to have been not an inapt representation of the continuous fidelity and religious love of country of the men of Kildare."

That O'Connell confidently expected success is certain from the fact that during the summer of 1843 he was actually planning the parliament for College Green. At this time the world was ringing with his name. His popularity was at high tide. He actually refused his autograph to the czar of Russia because of his despotism, and the king of Bavaria accepted it as a favor. In Ireland he was passionately loved. Then came the blow from Peel.

The liberator had planned a monster meeting at Clontarf, near Dublin, for October eighth, 1843. The date fell on Sunday, and another Tara meeting seemed assured. The week before the proposed meeting there were some disconcerting rumors to the effect that the meeting would be proscribed. O'Connell refused to credit them. Then came the confirmation of the report—less than twenty-four hours before the meeting. There was something infamous, something murderous in the methods of Peel in this instance. An army of men thrown without warning into the midst of hundreds of thousands of men, women and children, as-

sembled in a lawful manner for a lawful purpose! O'Connell did not propose to call his people together to have them slaughtered. He sent messengers on the fleetest horses that could be procured in all directions to warn the people. He succeeded. When Sunday morning dawned all was quiet. The people had not been gathered in to be murdered. If such was Peel's intention he had been foiled. If it was not his purpose his actions were so suggestive of it that his friends have never been able to explain his delay in announcing the proscription, and his enemies in the house of commons denounced him for it.

But the government was not satisfied. A few days later Daniel O'Connell was indicted and arrested on a charge of conspiracy. He was prepared for the worst. He told his son that if he should be arraigned for treason he would make his confession and prepare for death. After giving bail, his first thought was of his people. To them he issued an address urging them to be patient and peaceful. He then retired to Darrynane to await his trial—a trial which we shall see was the same sickening mockery which had always marked the trials of Irish patriots.

VIII

Lingering in his mountain home by the sea until the time set for the trial, O'Connell went back to Dublin, where the people rallied about him as a conqueror. He went to court in the coach of the lord mayor, followed by a procession of aldermen, all repealers, all wearing the garb of repealers. The trial itself was a farce. The speech of Sheil in defense was the one brilliant

feature, and it only served to illuminate the surrounding darkness and expose the baseness of the government. The jury was carefully packed, not one Catholic being on it, notwithstanding the fact that the community was overwhelmingly Catholic. Lecky, who tries to be fair in treating of Irish subjects, but not always with success, is very delicious when he says, "An error, which at least one English judge believed not to have been unintentional, was made in the panel of the jury, and by this error more than twenty Catholics were excluded from the juror list." This was, of course, "an error," but a very ordinary one in those enlightened days. Quite naturally O'Connell was convicted.

The verdict created a sensation throughout the world. It was difficult for some nations to understand. When immediately afterward O'Connell went to London and appeared in the house of commons he was greeted with wild applause on the liberal side. This did not deceive him. He knew that the applause was mostly antagonistic to Sir Robert Peel—that most of the applauding members were inwardly delighted at the humiliation of an Irishman. There were some members of the parliament, however, Lord John Russell among them, who could not but contemplate with feelings of revulsion the shameless travesty of justice.

When, the latter part of May, judgment was pronounced, Daniel O'Connell was sentenced to one year in prison. He merely imparted respectability to a prison. When he went to Richmond Bridewell, which he had selected, to begin the serving of his sentence, the government gave him an escort of mounted police, and behind the police, in deathlike silence, marched thou-

sands of sympathizers and patriots. At the gate of the prison the multitude gave a lusty cheer for the "criminal."

His life in prison was made as comfortable as possible. He had pleasant quarters, the companionship of other political "criminals" with whom he was permitted to dine, and was given every possible liberty by the keeper of the prison who naturally felt ashamed of his job. Here he issued a letter to the people of Ireland begging them to maintain the peace, and hither came addresses from lovers of liberty and enemies of despotism all over the world.

When, at length, the house of lords reversed the action of the court and ordered his liberation, the people of Dublin determined to have a triumphal procession from the prison to O'Connell's house. The scene was marvelous. Thousands lined the way. All the trades were out with bands and banners. There were not enough equipages in Dublin to meet the demand and others were sent from distant places. The lord mayor and others marched in their robes of office to do honor to the man who was a "criminal" to England, a hero to all the world beside. No policeman was in sight. None was needed. The idolators of this desperate culprit voluntarily kept the peace. Riding through the streets in an imposing car, when the old parliament house was reached, O'Connell ordered the procession to pause. Without a word he pointed to the deserted parliament house. It was one of his most eloquent moments.

But his work was over. Broken in health and spirit, the O'Connell who went into the Richmond Bridewell was not the O'Connell who emerged. England had

broken the back of constitutional agitation, and a more militant spirit was abroad in the land. The fight with the leaders of Young Ireland, which belongs to the sketch of Meagher, was pathetic. It broke the liberator's heart.

And then the terrible famine came upon the land. The people were unable to help themselves, and England appeared indifferent. While England was debating, America was sending food. It was during this period that the Duke of Cambridge said that conditions were not so bad in Ireland. "I understand," he said, "that rotten potatoes and seaweed, or even grass, properly mixed, afford a very wholesome and nutritious food. We all know that Irishmen can live upon anything, and there is plenty of grass in the fields even if the potato crop should fail." This was the language of a Christian prince. Referring to this brutal comment, O'Connell in his last speech in Ireland said:

"There is the son of a king—the brother of a king—the uncle of a monarch—there is his description of Ireland for you. Oh, why does he think thus of the Irish people? Perhaps he has been reading Spencer, who wrote at a time when Ireland was not put down by the strong arm of force or defeated in battle—because she never was defeated—but when the plan was laid down to starve the Irish nation. For three years every portion of the crop was trampled down by the horses of mounted soldiery; for three years the crops were destroyed, and human creatures were found lying behind ditches, with their mouths green from eating sorrel and the grass of the field. The Duke of Cambridge, I suppose, wishes that we should have such scenes again enacted in this country. And it is possible that in the presence of some of the illustrious nobility of England a royal personage could be found to utter horrors of this description? I

will go over to England and see what they intend to do for the Irish—whether they are of opinion that the Irish are to feed on grass or eat mangrel-wurzel. If that should be attempted—and may God avert the possibility of the occurrence—I do not hesitate to say it would be the duty of every man to die with arms in his hand."

And to England O'Connell went—the mere shadow of his former self. Disraeli has left us a picture of his last appearance in the house of commons where he tried to soften the English heart in the presence of the cruel calamity that had befallen his people. Old, feeble, broken-hearted, his words were scarcely audible. He was heard in a sort of reverential silence. Even his old political enemies were kind and considerate, and the queen sent to inquire after his health. But his mission was a failure.

Ordered by his physicians to a warmer climate, he set out for Rome. Passing through France he was received with every mark of respect, the people congregating in front of his hotels. He gave no heed. He no longer cared for worldly honors. When he reached Genoa, he was compelled to stop. Addresses poured in upon him from all parts of the world, but he did not read them. The public services that were held in all the churches of Lyons in France to pray for his recovery, touched him. But the end had come, and on March fifteenth, 1847, Daniel O'Connell passed from the scene of his triumphs. His heart, which he bequeathed to Rome, was deposited in an urn, and presented to Saint Peter's. The funereal obsequies in Rome were marvelously impressive—all pomp and magnificence, befitting a king among men. When his body reached Dublin in August it was received with

royal honors; and his grave is in the famous cemetery of Glasvenin, in Dublin. It is a shrine.

IX

The Daniel O'Connell of Darrynane would have delighted Sir Walter Scott. At his beautiful home in the mountains and by the sea almost inaccessible by ordinary travel for many years, he lived like a medieval chief of a clan. Darrynane House, on the wild and rocky coast of Kerry, was in the midst of scenery that appealed to the expansive nature of the orator. He could look out, summer and winter, on the great waves of the sea that broke on the rock-bound coast. On the west and north of the house rugged mountains reared their crests two thousand feet, in the air, while the east view was bounded by a chain of rocks that divide the bay of Darrynane from that of Kenmare. Close to the house was a twelve-acre tract, rocky and irregular, with charming paths winding through the irregularities. In the midst of this shrubbery-covered space was a little circular turret crowning an ivied rock where the liberator loved to withdraw for meditation. The house itself, having been added to from generation to generation to meet practical requirements, had no special architectural plan. The place was remote, and until 1837, when a new road was built from Cahirciveen, men were employed to drag carriages with ropes along five miles of road that was too precipitous for any other method of travel.

Throughout his life O'Connell dispensed a lordly hospitality. The table was always laid for thirty guests and no one, no matter what his political creed,

religious belief or circumstance, was ever turned away. One Protestant minister, writing in the *Dublin Christian Journal,* has left a record of his impressions of Darrynane and its master in which he enthusiastically praises O'Connell for his infinite tact, geniality and generous hospitality. True to the idea of a chief of a clan, O'Connell always sat at the head of the table, and at breakfast wore his little green repeal cap. The house was comfortably but not magnificently furnished. Some of the furniture had been purchased at the auction of Lord Clare's belongings, and O'Connell loved to surprise his guests with the remark—"These were once present at high Orange orgies. I bought them at the auction of that petticoat Robespierre, Lord Clare."

Throughout his life O'Connell was passionately fond of hunting. At such times O'Connell was in his element, as he walked or ran from rock to rock, keeping in sight of the dogs. The magnificence of the scenery, the pure invigorating air, the brilliant sunshine, the baying of the dogs echoing from crag to crag, acted upon him like wine and he was wont to laugh and shout and jest with his party like a schoolboy out on a lark. Mr. Howitt, who visited Darrynane in 1835, has described the mode of living there as that of an elegant country gentleman. Between the rocks and the sea there stretched a beautiful meadow which was a favorite promenade and playground for the peasantry, and it was the practise of O'Connell on Sunday afternoons, to take his family and walk among the peasants, exchanging jests with them, and watching them in their dancing and games. To these simple folk he was a veritable chief. He heard their troubles, ad-

vised them in their difficulties, composed their quarrels, settled their differences, and his word meant more to them than the decree of the highest court in Ireland. In 1835 a cowardly attempt was made to create the impression that he was a cruel or indifferent landlord, and some of the English papers teemed with libelous stories of the condition of his tenants. W. E. Forster, an English writer, visited Darrynane about this time and satisfied himself that the charges were without foundation. Lecky also credits him with being an ideal landlord, and cities in justification of this view his action during the cholera epidemic of 1834 when he wrote his agent to spare no expense in alleviating the sufferings of the people; to provide medical attention, to see that all the poor about Darrynane had a meat diet. "Be prodigal of my means," he wrote, "beef, bread, mutton, medicines, physician, everything you can think of."

Little wonder that the man who was abused by the English press for accepting the annual tribute of his people for services rendered on the ground that he was enriching himself on the credulity of his countrymen should have found himself in old age considerably embarrassed, and died a comparatively poor man.

It has been said that there was no sentiment or poetry in the nature of O'Connell. The best evidence to the contrary is to be found in his letter to Walter Savage Landor, written from Darrynane in 1838:

"Were you with me amidst the Alpine scenery surrounding my humble abode listening to the eternal roar of the mountain torrent as it bounds through the rocky defiles of my native glens, I would venture to tell you how I was born within the sound of the everlasting wave,

and how my dreamy boyhood dwelt in imaginary intercourse with those who were dead of yore, and fed its fond fancies upon the ancient and long faded glories of that land which preserved Christianity when the rest of now civilized Europe was shrouded in the darkness of godless ignorance. Yes, my expanding spirit delighted in these day dreams, till, catching from them an enthusiasm which no disappointment can embitter, nor accumulating years diminish, I formed the high resolve to leave my native land better after my death than I found her at my birth, and, if possible, to make her what she ought to be—

> " 'Great, glorious, and free,
> First flower of the earth, and first gem of the sea.' "

Such a letter was never written by one barren in sentiment, or unappreciative of poetry.

The life of O'Connell in Dublin was necessarily quite different from that of the lordly man of leisure who followed his dogs day after day into the mountains. After lighting his own fire, he was accustomed to sit down in his library and work from five o'clock until breakfast was ready at eight-thirty, and two hours later he would start to court, almost always walking for the exercise. At three-thirty o'clock, when the work in the courts was over, he would hurry to the office of the Catholic association, where he would look over the mail, write an enormous number of letters and petitions, and then on home for dinner. After dining he would mingle with his family until six-thirty, when he invariably retired to his library, where he studied until nine-forty-five, at which time it was his practise to retire. Few men could have withstood such a strain, but his was a constitution of iron.

Great, robust, fighting man of the world though he seemed to be, there was a deeply religious strain to his character. He maintained a priest always at his home at Darrynane. After the death of his wife in 1837 he made a retreat at the Mount Melleray Abbey, near Nantes, which was occupied mostly by Irish monks. He reached the abbey after dark and was met at the outer gate by a procession of monks, who sang one of their grand anthems. When, upon kneeling, the *Te Deum Laudamus* was intoned he was profoundly touched. He listened to an address of welcome, and then retired to solitude, speaking thereafter only to the abbot, and devoting the whole time to prayer and meditation. Admirers who called were refused admission, and he entered heart and soul into the religious atmosphere of the place.

X

Of O'Connell the orator there can be but one opinion—he was one of the most marvelous the world has known. John Randolph of Roanoke, himself one of the foremost orators of America, after having heard him, described him as easily the first orator in Europe. Duvergier, the French critic, after having listened to him, said: "I know of no living orator who communicates so thoroughly to his audience the idea of the most profound and absolute conviction." Wendell Phillips, the most polished, one of the most brilliant masters of the art of oratory that America has produced, in his eloquent lecture on O'Connell says that "broadly speaking, his eloquence has never been equaled in modern times." And again he says: "I

remember the solemnity of Webster, the grace of Everett, the rhetoric of Choate; I know the eloquence that lay hidden in the iron logic of Calhoun; I have melted beneath the magnetism of Sargent S. Prentiss of Mississippi, who wielded a power few men ever had. It has been my fortune to sit at the feet of the great speakers of the English tongue on the other side of the ocean. But I think all of them together never surpassed, and no one of them ever equaled O'Connell. Nature intended him for our Demosthenes. Never since the great Greek has she sent forth any one so lavishly gifted for his work as a tribune of the people." And still later, in dwelling upon O'Connell's versatility, he said: "Webster could awe a senate, Everett could charm a college, and Choate cheat a jury; Clay could magnetize the millions, and Corwin lead them captive. O'Connell was Clay, Corwin, Choate, Everett and Webster in one."

O'Connell introduced a new note into British oratory. When the other great British speakers had confined their efforts largely, almost wholly to parliament and the courts, O'Connell sought his audience in the great masses, the unlettered millions. How unutterably silly would have been a Burkean oration before the million spread out upon the hill of Tara! It was the prime purpose of O'Connell to deliver his message and to strike conviction to the hearers. "A fine speech," he once said, "is a great thing, but, after all, the verdict is the thing." Consequently he adapted his style and his language to his audience. He did not confuse them with close reasoning, bemuddle them with a fine show of learning—he spoke a language they could understand. He used a canvas too immense for

delicate shading. He had to employ strong and vivid coloring, and his strokes were necessarily bold rather than subtle. This was responsible for the charge of coarseness which has been lodged against his art. All through his comparatively fair and highly illuminative monogram, Lecky, the historian, recurs continuously to the use of the words "mob oratory" in describing his popular style. He could not mean by this that O'Connell appealed to mobs. His audiences were famous for their peaceful demeanor. "Mob oratory" is oratory used on a mob—and with Lecky the mob is the great unsung millions. It was a new thing in O'Connell's day to appeal to "the mob." It was not the fashion. No great Irish orator previous to the liberator undertook it.

Aside from his personal magnetism and commanding appearance, the secret of O'Connell's success lay in his consummate knowledge of human nature. He knew its intellectual limitations and he never went beyond them. He was never tempted to explode Disraelian epigrams above their heads to amuse himself with the pyrotechnics. He understood their likes and dislikes, their prejudices and passions, and he played upon their emotions at will. He never marred the effect of a strong speech upon the crowd by over-adornment. Sheil, who was a master rhetorician, once said that O'Connell "often threw out a brood of sturdy young ideas upon the world without a rag to cover them."

It should be remembered that while his work was largely before the millions, he was not limited to what Lecky so loves to call his "mob" style. In his monogram on O'Connell the English historian, in com-

paring the orator's speech to the multitude and that at the bar of the house in claiming his seat, says: "To those who would understand O'Connell's power and the versatility on which it so largely depended, it is instructive to compare his promises to the Catholic association with his speech on the same subject at the bar of the house. This speech at once established his parliamentary position. Clear, pointed, admirably reasoned and admirably arranged, without the slightest tinge either of egotism or declamation or bad taste, it was a legal argument of the best kind, delivered with perfect simplicity of gesture, with a consummate beauty of voice and with complete self-possession of manner." Thus we are justified in the conclusion that his "mob" speeches were deliberately planned, and with consummate art.

Few orators have been so fortunate in their physical appeal to the senses. Grattan, Curran, Emmet, Sheil and Meagher were small men, not the least impressive to the eye. O'Connell was a man of royal aspect. His voice was seductively musical—the most musical, according to Disraeli, ever heard in the house of commons. It was soft, of great compass, capable of expressing every imaginable emotion. His eyes, light in color, and full, flashed or beamed or burned according to the sentiment expressed. His contemporaries all mention the expressibility of his mouth. His gestures were free and bold, not in the least suggestive of elocution and yet infinitely graceful and apt. There was nothing in his manner indicative of preparation. His manner was easy, and without effort. Wendell Phillips, who heard him, says in his lecture: "We used to say of Webster, 'This is a great effort,' of Everett, 'It

is a beautiful effort,' but you never used the word 'effort' in speaking of O'Connell. It provoked you that he would not make an effort."

He was a master of characterization. The *London Times* he contemptuously dubbed, "The Old Lady of the Strand"; the clever Stanley he called "Scorpion Stanley"; the Duke of Wellington was denounced in one of his speeches, which greatly shocked the English public, as "the stunted corporal." His most bitter and famous invective was leveled at Disraeli, certainly not without provocation.

O'Connell's invective against Saurin, the Orange attorney-general who practised his persecutions through such a long period of years with the evident connivance of the government, is famous in the literature of denunciation, and created a profound sensation at the time it was delivered during the Magee trial. Another of his famous invectives was aimed at Lord Leveson Gower, chief secretary of Ireland, whose defense of some official scamp impelled O'Connel to express an opinion of the type of politician ordinarily assigned to the position of secretary in Dublin.

"Their juvenile statesmanship is inflicted upon my unhappy country. I have heard that barbers train their apprentices by making them shave beggars. My wretched country is the scene of his (Gower's) political education—he is the shave-beggar of the day for Ireland. I have now done with the noble lord. I disregard his praise—I court his censure. I can not express how strongly I repudiate his pretensions to importance, and I defy him to point out any one act of his administration to which my countrymen could look with admiration or gratitude, or any other feelings than those of total disregard. His name will serve as a date in the margin

of the history of Dublin Castle—his name will sink into contemptuous oblivion."

After the delivery of this speech the secretaries for Ireland were quite frequently referred to as "shave-beggars."

When the Tories took office and appointed an Englishman to a judicial position in Ireland, O'Connell bitterly resented what he assumed to be an insult to the Irish bar. In a burst of tremendous bitterness he exclaimed:

"The Tories have again come in, and their first act has been to appoint an Englishman. And what! Is the bar so degraded that it will not call a bar meeting—that it will not remonstrate—that it will not protest against this insult? Is the spirit of Ireland so far quenched—is the love of fatherland so gone by that not one voice but mine will exclaim against this profanation of Irish talent—this degradation of Irish intellect—this outrage upon Irish learning and acquirements—that all, all must be passed by and an Englishman placed over our heads? Oh, shame upon those who do not love their country! Oh, shame upon those who would allow any pitiful, paltry, miserable political spleen to come between them and the genuine expression of their feelings! Oh, shame upon those who will allow unnatural divisions with their own countrymen to deceive them into being slaves to others! Oh, shame upon those who say we ought to be treated as inferiors and branded as slaves in our native land!

"And what profession is it that is thus treated with contempt? One which Hussey Burgh enlightened with his brilliant oratory in my own time; that profession to which Ducarry gave a beauty of language consecrated by taste, and aided by the powers of a chaste eloquence; that profession in which I have heard the mingled sweet-

ness of tunes, that came upon me like soft sounding bells, and pealing forth with facts beautified with illustration in the language of the lamented Yelverton; that profession in which I saw scattering around me the brilliant coruscations of the ethereal genius of Curran. Yes, a genius as brilliant as it was warm—like a star that gives its whiteness to the milky way, his mind poured forth a flood of light, and its magic was felt by all who came within its influence. . . . What, am I to be told that a profession which produced Curran has not now among its members one who will acknowledge himself an Irishman? Who will not resent the indignities offered to them as Irishmen and as a profession? Oh, if it be so, let them wear their dog-collars, and let 'English slave' be branded on them, as they slink away from the frown of their masters. Let the boys hoot after them as they slink to the courts; let the women spit upon them at the Ormond market, as they go along—and let them thus, covered with the slime and filth of the country, go like cringing sycophants and soulless slaves and crouch before their English chancellor."

O'Connell knew how to reach the heart. One of his greatest triumphs in stirring the emotions can not be quoted owing to the fact that it was spoken in the Gaelic tongue. One evening, while at the hotel in Tralee, the people gathered in front demanding a speech and the orator appeared at the window and addressed them in their native tongue. It was just after the massacre of some Catholics and O'Connell whipped them into a frenzy of feeling with a marvelously pathetic picture of a widow searching among the dead for her son; laughing in the wildness of her joy on turning over the bodies and finding the victim to be a stranger, until at length she found her child. It was a short speech, but the picture was so horribly graphic,

so overpoweringly pitiful, that the men cursed as they wept.

Now colloquial and now majestic as regality, now convulsing the people with laughter and now driving them to tears, inciting them to indignation, playing upon their pride, their prejudice and their patriotism, he was the tribune of the people without a peer. He proved that oratory is not alone of value in the parliament house or in the courts. He pointed the way to forcing legislative action through political agitation in the country. He demonstrated that though the press be purchased, the courts be polluted, the public places be filled with tyrants or weaklings, that the liberties and rights of the masses can be subserved so long as they can find one eloquent man of genius to voice their protest.

VII

THOMAS FRANCIS MEAGHER

The Young Ireland Militant Movement; the Famine; the Uprising of 1848

IT was about the time that Lamartine gave to the world his graphic story of the party of the Gironde, that a new party, suggestive of the brilliant revolutionary organization by virtue of the extraordinary brilliancy and youth of its leaders, was born in Ireland. This party was born of the popular demand. O'Connell, now in his decline after Clontarf, had aroused the nation to a realization of its rights, but lacked the courage to lead it to battle. The masses were calling loudly—"The word, O'Connell, give us the word"—and he was silent. And in that silence the new Irish party was born—the party known to history as Young Ireland.

In the autumn of 1842, a new paper was launched in Dublin which was to become the nucleus of the new organization—*The Nation.* It was the virile voice of nationality. It electrified the reawakened intellect of Ireland. Its mission was to create a national spirit, to develop a national life, to amalgamate all factions, all religions, the descendants of all nationalities into one harmonious whole, and dedicate it to the cause of independence. Its pages fairly scintillated with the genius

of its writers, and its publication marked the literary renaissance of the green isle. The dynamic power of *The Nation* was the genius of Thomas Davis, the brilliant poet, whose passion for a restored nationality conceived the national movement to go beyond the restoration of the parliament and to embrace the creation of an Irish literature, an Irish art, an Irish industry, and, if need be, an Irish army. His militant poetry gave to Erin her *Marseillaise,* and his vigorous prose stirred like the marching of many men. The office of *The Nation* became the recruiting station of genius and Charles Gavan Duffy, Thomas Darcy McGee, Thomas Devin Reilly, Lady Wilde, and that Ulster lawyer who was statesman, writer, soldier, propagandist, organizer all in one, John Mitchell, enlisted for the war. Thus the leaven of Erin began to work.

Then came the calamity that momentarily left Ireland cold, the melancholy death of Davis—a calamity converted into a blessing, for his memory became a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, exhorting the youth of Ireland to be up and doing. The organizing genius of Smith O'Brien, the pen of Mitchell, the songs of Lady Wilde created an appeal reaching down from the drawing-rooms of Dublin to the most humble cottage in Kerry. But brilliant though the pen of Mitchell, thrilling though the songs of the Irish woman, inspiring though the soldierly courage of O'Brien, the militant youth would have been seriously handicapped in its appeal from the conservative policy of the eloquent O'Connell, had it not possessed a tongue of fire. This, too, it had—a tongue as eloquent as ever yet has lashed the Celtic nature into storm—

the tongue of the orator of '48, Thomas Francis Meagher—"Meagher of the Sword."

I

In the house on the quay at Waterford, latterly known as Cummins Hotel, on August twenty-third, 1823, Thomas Francis Meagher was born. The home into which he entered, if not one of opulence or pretension, was one of comfort. During the first ten years of his life he received his schooling in his native city, and there is nothing of record to indicate that at this time he had given any evidence of the surprising precocity which was so soon afterward to manifest itself. It was here, however, that he fed his love of Ireland while meandering through the beautiful country about the seaport town. The mountains with their mystery, the peaceful valleys with their flocks, the gentle streams, all the manifold beauties of nature spoke to his imagination, and no doubt began the development of the poetic fancy which was, in after years, to impart such charm to his eloquence. On the beautiful eminence of Mount Misery, so wretchedly misnamed, about a mile from the city and overlooking the Suir, he loved to sit alone, the exquisite panorama of city and countryside spread out before him, and looking down upon "town and tower, dark groves and distant spires, rich meadows and dark cornfields," permit his boyish fancy to run wild. His budding genius thrived on solitude. His early playmates were the children of his fancy.

In his eleventh year he was sent to the Jesuit College of Clongowes-Wood, which was situated in the

fertile plain in Kildare, and in his letters we find that his love of nature, awakened by the hills and rivers of his native town, seized eagerly upon "the landscape soothing in its tendency, serenely placid, rich, inert, contented looking, and dreamy."

Here in the great building with the round towers he spent six years that were to make an indelible impression upon his character and to determine the course of his career. Brilliant in all his studies, it is significant that in English composition he had no peer. In the college debating society he was, by common consent, the leading member. His genius was in words and ideas from his boyhood.

Sometime after leaving the college he wrote his criticism of the school. "They talked to us," he said, "about Mount Olympus and the Vale of Tempe; they birched us into flippant acquaintance with the disreputable gods and goddesses of the golden and heroic ages; they entangled us with Euclid; turned our heads with the terrestrial globe; chilled our blood with dizzy excursions through the Milky Way; paralyzed our Lilliputian loins with the shaggy spoils of Hercules; bewildered us with the battle of the frogs and mice; pitched us precipitately into England amongst the impetuous Normans and the stupid Saxons; gave us a look through the interminable telescope at what was being done in the New World; but as far as Ireland was concerned they left us like blind and crippled children in the dark."

When in his seventeenth year he passed over to England for the completion of his education at Stonyhurst College, where he remained four years. He shocked the professor of English literature by reading

Shakespearian lines with a pronounced Irish brogue, called forth the horror of the faculty with his deviltry, and maintained his superiority to all his fellows in rhetoric, composition and forensics.

After the fashion of his time, he topped off his education by a continental tour, traversed the Rhine country, and lingered lovingly in the old medieval cities with their tang of romance and mystery.

Early in the spring of 1844 he began his professional studies at Queen's Inn, Dublin, where he was shocked by the superficiality of society and its depressing tendency to ape English taste. It was the time of the trial of O'Connell, when Ireland was facing her gravest crisis, and it maddened him to find the town filled with soldiers and spies, the hotels overrun by supercilious English reporters, the theaters thronged with the gay and giddy, and the fashionable section of the city aglow with dozens of balls every night. To Meagher there was but one redeeming feature to the situation—the inspirational note of *The Nation,* the thundering of the repeal orators, the meetings at Conciliation Hall, where he heard Smith O'Brien denounce the inactivity of Ireland and challenge the constituted authorities. This was the bugle call he had awaited—it made inevitable the course he was to follow.

II

When, in the spring of '46, Smith O'Brien conceived the idea of organizing the youthful genius of Ireland into a militant band of battling patriots through the establishment of the parliamentary committee of the Repeal Association, Thomas Francis Meagher was

made a member of the committee. From the moment of his entrance into the organization the fight for the liberty of his native isle became the serious business of his life. He threw himself into the work with an enthusiasm that kept him at his task from twelve o'clock to five o'clock every day, and it was during this period that he was brought to a realization of the practical importance of organization. Content though he might have been to devote himself to the mere drudgery of the committee, the keen appreciative eye of O'Brien almost instantly divined that the genius of the new recruit was of an exceptional order, and that he could be utilized to better advantage as a protagonist of the cause. Whatever may have been the mistakes of O'Brien he can not be charged with an inability properly to appraise men. To all the youthful converts he assigned a task fitted to their temperament, and in Meagher he foresaw the spokesman of the radicals. Thus was he assigned the duty of speaking at Conciliation Hall on February sixteenth, 1846.

When the slender youth, with the eloquent eyes and thrilling voice, faced the audience, familiar with the genius of the most brilliant patriots of Erin, he knew it to be a critical assembly, but pursuing the policy which he never wholly abandoned, he had prepared himself with the most painstaking care. The beauty of his phraseology and imagery and magnetism of his presence made a profound impression and stamped him as a new orator in Ireland; while his plea for united and concentrated action conducted with dignity and decorum disclosed the possession of a mature judgment. Underlying it all was the fierce determination that Ireland should be free. The opening sen-

tences set forth concisely the views he never abandoned —the views that finally drove him in chains from the land of his nativity.

"We have pledged ourselves," he said, "never to accept the union—to accept the union upon no terms, nor any modification of the union. It ill becomes a country like ours—a country with an ancient fame—a country that gave light to Europe whilst Europe's oldest state of this day was yet an infant in civilization and in arms—a country that has written down great names on the brightest page of European literature—a country that has sent orators into the senate whose eloquence to the latest day will inspire free sentiments and dictate bold acts—a country that has sent soldiers into the field whose courage and honor it will ever be our proudest privilege to record, if not our noblest duty to imitate—a country whose sculptors rank high in Rome, and whose painters have won for Irish genius a proud preeminence even in the capital of the stranger—a country whose poets have had their melodies reechoed from the most polished courts of Europe to the loneliest dwelling in the deep forest beyond the Mississippi—it ill becomes a country so distinguished and so respectable to serve as the subaltern of England, qualified as she is to take up an eminent position and stand erect in the face of Europe."

Thus, lyrically, he winged his way to the hearts of his hearers and prepared the way for the reception of his declaration of faith:

"Thus shall a parliament, molded from the soil, racy of the soil, pregnant with the sympathies and glowing with the genius of the soil, be here raised up. Thus shall an honorable kingdom be enabled to fulfil the great ends that a bounteous Providence hath assigned her—which ends have been signified to her in the resources of her soil and in the abilities of her sons."

General Thomas Francis Meagher
From portrait made shortly after coming to the United States

To comprehend thoroughly the thrill of delight with which the patriots of Ireland hailed the new spokesman of repeal it must be borne in mind that Sheil had already fallen a pathetic victim to the blandishments of London, and O'Connell had given evidence of decline. With these two giants of the platform eliminated, there had, up until this time, appeared none other to take their place.

Meagher was the spokesman of the New Movement! He appeared upon the scene just at the juncture when he was most needed.

The altered aspect of the nationalist cause in Ireland had grown out of the changed political complexion of England. The Tories had lost their power and the Whigs, under the leadership of Lord John Russell, had assumed control. Just previous to the downfall of the Peel ministry a conference of the leaders of the opposition had been held at the residence of Lord John in which O'Connell and his son had participated, and the word had gone forth from this conference that the Irish leader had insisted that all he asked was "a real union—the same laws and franchises in the two countries." This fateful assurance fell upon Ireland like a pall. Against the prospective alliance between the Irish leaders and the Whigs the leaders of the younger element entered a vehement protest through *The Nation.* "No repealer," wrote John Mitchell, "even would dare to whisper it in the solitude of his chamber lest the very birds of the air might carry it to an Irish ear." At an exciting meeting in Conciliation Hall, Meagher was put forth to voice the bitter dissent of the militants. Then came the apostacy of Sheil, due to his acceptance from the Whigs, of the mas-

tership of the mint, and his reelection to the house of commons with the votes of Whigs and the covert aid of O'Connell. The break between the venerable leader and the militant element was now inevitable. Determined to defeat the militants by forced marches the father of emancipation forced through a meeting at Conciliation Hall a resolution explicitly pronouncing against any methods of amelioration other than those of a peaceful character. The lines were drawn.

The final disruption came a little later. The dates were July twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth, 1846—vital dates in Irish history.

The scene was one of the most impressive in the political history of the island. The genius, the chivalry of the land were in attendance—young men eager for an appeal to arms, old men whose memories reached back to the stirring days of '98. In the chair sat the lord mayor of Dublin—a splendid figure. There sat the son of the venerable leader surrounded by the field marshals of Old Ireland. There, too, with Meagher, Mitchell and the brilliant leaders of the new movement, sat the son of Grattan and the dashing Smith O'Brien.

Brushing aside the importunities of O'Brien to desist from action tending to disruption, John O'Connell introduced resolutions calculated to drive the younger men from the organization, and, confronted by the amazing proposition that there is never any justification for an appeal to arms, O'Brien went over into the ranks of Young Ireland.

The climax came on the second day. Once more Young Ireland put forward its most brilliant orator. When Meagher rose he was received coldly. The

meeting was packed against him. Gradually, as he warmed to his subject, the audience began to thaw. Indifference yielded to amazement, and then to admiration, and then applause. It was the Sword Speech —destined to scintillate over Europe and to take its place among the classics of the English language. As he launched like an inspired poet into his lyrical apostrophe to the sword the effect was magical. He held the audience within the hollow of his hand.

"Then, my lord," cried the orator, "I do not condemn the use of arms as immoral; nor do I conceive it profane to say that the King of Heaven—the Lord of Hosts —the God of Battles—bestows His benediction upon those who unsheathe the sword in the hour of a nation's peril.

"From the evening on which in the valley of Bethulia He nerved the arm of the Jewish girl to smite the drunken tyrant in his tent down to this, our day, on which He has blessed the insurgent chivalry of the Belgian priest, His almighty hand hath ever been stretched forth from His throne of light to consecrate the flag of freedom—to bless the patriot's sword. Be it in the defense, or be it in the assertion of a people's liberty, I hail the sword as a sacred weapon; and if, my lord, it has sometimes taken the shape of a serpent and reddened the shroud of the oppressor with too deep a dye, like the anointed rod of the high priest, it has at other times, and as often, blossomed into celestial flowers to deck the freeman's brow.

"Abhor the sword—stigmatize the sword! No, my lord, for in the passes of the Tyrol it cut to pieces the banner of the Bavarians, and through those cragged passes struck a path to fame for the present insurrectionists of Innsbruck.

"Abhor the sword—stigmatize the sword! No, my lord, for at its blow a grand nation started from the waters of the Atlantic; and by its redeeming magic, and

in the quivering of its crimson light, the crippled colony sprang into the attitude of a proud republic—prosperous, limitless, invincible.

"Abhor the sword—stigmatize the sword! No, my lord, for it swept the Dutch marauders out of the fine old towns of Belgium—scourged them back to their own phlegmatic swamps, and knocked their flag and scepter, their laws and bayonets, into the sluggish waters of the Scheldt.

"My lord, I learned that it was the right of a nation to govern herself, not in this hall, but upon the ramparts of Antwerp. This, the first article of a nation's creed, I learned upon those ramparts, where freedom was justly estimated and the possession of the precious gift was purchased by the effusion of generous blood."

By this time the audience was swaying like a forest in a storm. The applause was born of ecstasy. Infuriated by the effect, the son of O'Connell, in the spirit of an angry boy, broke in with a protest that prevented the completion of the most wonderful oration that stands to the credit of the historic building in which the genius of Ireland had so frequently burst into flame.

Then it was that the disruption came. Young Ireland had made and won its fight in the legitimate methods of debate, was muzzled in the erstwhile cradle of Irish liberty, and when Meagher passed from the platform, the militants of Ireland marched in a body from the hall. Meagher had reached the soul of Ireland. It was "Speranza" (Lady Wilde) who put in words the verdict of the people:

"Thus in glory is he seen, though his years are yet but green—
The Anointed, as head of our nation.

For High Heaven hath decreed that a soul like his must lead—
Let us kneel then in deep adoration.

"Oh, his mission is divine—dash down the Lotus wine—
Too long in your tranced sleep abiding;
And by Him who gave us life, we shall conquer in the strife,
So we follow but that young chief's guiding."

III

That the arrogant attitude toward the leaders of Young Ireland did not represent the real impulses of Daniel O'Connell was made evident in a scene enacted in the study of the Merrion Street home of the old warrior where, immediately following the secession, he sat in deep depression surrounded by some friends. Turning to one of his followers, he authorized him to invite the young men back into the association upon their own terms. Just as the messenger of peace was about to leave, John O'Connell entered the room, and learning of the intention of his father, promptly vetoed the proposition of conciliation. Thus does the son of the "uncrowned king" ever appear during this period in a sinister light. A little later the great leader did write a personal invitation to Meagher to return, but by this time the die had been cast and the Rubicon crossed.

Driven from the one organization perfected for patriotic purposes in Ireland, the young seceders called a mass meeting early in January of 1847 in the rotunda where the Irish Confederation was born. In a set of resolutions, the new society defined its methods, ideas

and purposes. With a subtlety that did credit to their judgment, the seceders disclaimed the slightest animosity toward the Repeal Association, basing their separation solely upon a difference as to the policy to be pursued. Legislative independence for Ireland, absolute independence of all English parties, the combination of all classes and creeds in the interest of the national cause—these were the striking features of the declaration of the Rotunda. Thus Young Ireland came into possession of an organization of its own.

After all it was a happy event for Ireland. The once powerful O'Connell, now in his decline, was very soon to pass from the scene. The year of desolation had come. The gaunt specter of famine was stalking through the land knocking at the cottage doors. Battling against starvation, the spirit of nationality began to flicker in the minds of the people. Men in need of bread are apt to forget their country. At such an hour, with the English ministry refusing adequate succor to the starving, and with the once trusted leaders of the repeal movement playing sycophants to the English ministers in return for patronage, the spirit of nationality might have died down in desolation and dismay. Might? Nay, would, but for the injection at this critical juncture of the virile young militants of the new organization. They immediately set themselves the task of reviving the drooping spirits of the patriots. In every village, in every settlement, wherever a corporal's guard of patriots could be found, a Confederation club was established. In a surprisingly short time more than ten thousand young, enthusiastic and determined men were mustered into the new army of freedom. These men were prepared to vote together

—more significant still, prepared to fight together should their leaders give the word.

It was in connection with their plans for constitutional agitation for legislative independence that this little band of young men conceived the plan that was to be so successfully put into operation by Parnell more than a generation later. This contemplated the election to the parliament in London of a resolute band of capable and courageous men who could be depended upon to make Irish interests cross and impede and dominate the commons.

This idea, which met with the hearty commendation of Meagher, did not measure up to John Mitchell's conception of the need of the hour. To the forceful editor of *The Nation* the time for parliamentarian parley had passed—the time had come for an appeal to arms. While not adverse to an appeal to the sword, Meagher did not believe that the people had been adequately prepared to meet the power of the imperial army, and this division of opinion led to a special meeting of the Confederation and a debate of several days' duration ensued. This debate was to put a period to one phase of Meagher's revolutionary career, for his speech on this occasion was to be the last of his "constitutional" addresses. Even in this speech he shadowed forth the spirit that he was suppressing with difficulty at the time.

"You know well," he said, "that I am not one of those tame moralists who say that liberty is not worth a drop of blood. Against this miserable maxim the noblest virtue that has served and sanctified humanity appears in judgment. From the blue waters of the bay of Salamis —from the valley over which the sun stood still and

lit the Israelite to victory—from the cathedral in which the sword of Poland has been sheathed in the shroud of Kosciusko—from the convent of St. Isadore, where the fiery hand that rent the ensign of St. George upon the plains of Ulster has crumbled into dust—from the sands of the desert where the wild genius of the Algerine so long has scared the eagle of the Pyrenees—from the ducal palace in this kingdom where the memory of the gallant and seditious Geraldine enhances, more than royal favor, the nobility of his race—from the solitary grave, which, within this mute city, a dying request has left without an epitaph—oh, from every spot where heroism has had its sacrifice, or its triumph, a voice breaks in upon the cringing crowds that cheer this wretched maxim, crying out, 'Away with it, away with it!' Would to God, Sir, that we could take every barrack in this island this night, and with our blood purchase the independence of our country."

It was inevitable that a speech, so insidiously dangerous and appealing, should have attracted the attention of the Castle, and from the hour of its delivery Meagher was a marked man. The Confederation voted on this occasion as Meagher voted, but it felt deep down in its heart as Meagher felt when he gave utterance to the words just quoted. The debate served notice on the ministry in London that policy alone prevented the Confederation from issuing a call to arms.

The debate had scarcely closed when Meagher found himself involved in a contest which gave an opportunity for a reiteration of his militant opinions and his detestation of the Irish alliance with the Whigs. A vacancy occurring in the parliamentary representation of his native city of Waterford he determined to try conclusions with the candidate put forth by the Whigs with the support of the O'Connellites. With all the

burning impetuosity of his fiery nature he plunged into the fight. Not only did he face the miserable open enemies of his country's independence, but he encountered all the animosity of the old school of repealers who clung tenderly to the "uncrowned king." It is significant of the spirit of the orator that even the opposition of his father failed to dampen his spirits. His speeches on the hustings were the most passionate of his career. He spared neither the devotee of old Ireland nor the Whigs, and he pounced upon the place hunters with a ferocity that commanded the admiration even of his enemies.

"Well then," he exclaimed, "is Old Ireland still your cry? Old Ireland indeed! I am not against Old Ireland, but I am against the vices that have made Ireland old. The enmity I bear to the legislative union is not more bitter than the enmity I bear to those practises and passions from which that union derives its ruinous vitality."

Turning to the "bigot who would sacrifice his nation to the supremacy of a sect," he hurried on to the place hunters.

"Down with the place hunter—he who would traffic on a noble cause, and beg a bribe in the name of liberty. He who would spurn the people, upon whose shoulders he had mounted to that eminence from which he had beckoned to the minister and said, 'Look here—a slave to hire—a slave of consequence—a valuable slave—the people have confided in me.'"

At the time of Meagher's candidacy Waterford had a population of twenty-eight thousand people of whom

but seven hundred were qualified to vote. Throughout the contest his magnetic personality and inspiring eloquence easily made him the popular idol. The disfranchised thousands, the toilers, the cottagers, the poor, gave him their applause, their love, their adoration, but they had no votes to give, and when the ballots were counted it was found that he had been defeated by twenty votes.

If the young leader was chagrined at his defeat he had no time to nurse his humiliation, for it was the year of '48—the glorious year of the people, the critical year for kings and crowns. The spirit of liberty hovered over Europe and long-slumbering peoples awoke to a realization of their strength. In France the people had fought behind barricades in the streets of Paris and rewon their liberties. Once more the despondent of Ireland turned hopefully to the nation that had been saved at Fontenoy by the valor of an Irish brigade, just as they turned to France in '98, as the lamented Emmet turned a little later. Seizing the psychological opportunity the leaders of the Irish Confederation called a meeting to formulate an address to the French people. This meeting was infested by the spies of the government. This Meagher knew, and knowing, he defiantly threw down the gauntlet to England in a speech as revolutionary and incendiary as has ever been heard in Ireland.

"If the throne stand as a barrier between the Irish people and their supreme right," he said, "then loyalty will be a crime, and obedience to the executive will be treason to the country. I say it calmly, seriously, deliberately; it will then be our duty to fight and fight desperately."

At the utterance of these words the assembly rose as one man and the orator was given a tremendous ovation.

"The opinions of Whig statesmen have been quoted here to-night," he continued. "I beg to remind you of Lord Palmerston's language in reference to the insurrection in Lisbon last September—'I say that the people were justified in saying to the government: "If you do not give us a parliament in which to state our wrongs and grievances we shall state them by arms and by force."'

"I adopt those words and I call upon you to adopt them."

By this time the speaker's meaning had grown plain. He was reversing his speech in reply to Mitchell. He was making his appeal to the sword specific.

"The storm that dashed down the crown of Orleans against the column of July," he continued, "has rocked the foundations of the Castle. They have no longer a safe bedding in the Irish soil. To the first breeze that shakes the banners of the European rivals they must give way. Be you upon the watch to catch that breeze. When the world is in arms—when the silence which for two and thirty years has reigned upon the plain of Waterloo at last is broken—then be prepared to grasp your freedom with an armed hand, and hold it with the same."

It was not until the conclusion that Meagher threw his personal challenge in the faces of the governmental spies that were sprinkled through the crowd.

"Citizens of Dublin, you have heard my opinions. These opinions may be very rash, but it would not be honest to conceal them. The time has come for every

Irishman to speak out. The address of the university declares that it is the duty of every man in the kingdom to say whether he is a friend or a foe to the government. I think so, too, and I declare myself an enemy of the government."

This speech created a profound sensation, and the following week the orator was arrested, along with Mitchell and O'Brien, on the charge of sedition. Thus was the challenge accepted.

When these three popular heroes passed through the streets of Dublin to the police office to give bail, they probably could, by the raising of a hand, have precipitated a riot that would have developed into a revolution within twenty-four hours. A vast multitude went with them. It packed the streets from curb to curb, men in ugly mood, with flashing eyes, and feverish brows. It marched with that comparative silence which bodes no good to the enemy. All the passions of the race, all the pitiful memories of the years—evictions, massacres, legal assassinations—all marched with the throng. The heroes in front embodied the burning soul of Ireland. The multitude behind—mob if you will—was the brawn of a mighty people prepared to strike.

Meagher, Mitchell and O'Brien enter the police office, furnish bail, come out again. At the head of the multitude they proceed to the council room of the Confederation. The crowd is augmented at every intersection. The windows along the line of march are packed with men with tense faces as Ireland goes marching by. From the lamp-posts—significant in the hour of revolution—are clinging boys and men. The rain comes down in torrents, as Ireland goes marching by.

Reaching the council rooms Meagher appears at the windows. The multitude stands silent in the rain. And then in the spirit and manner of a commander, giving the word to charge, the orator defies the power of imperial England.

"The language of sedition is the language of freemen. There shall be no duplicity in this matter. I am guilty of an attempt to sow disaffection in the minds of the people. I am guilty of an attempt to overthrow this government, which keeps its footing on our soil by brute force and by nothing else. The news this morning announces that Vienna is in the hands of the people. Dublin must be in the hands of the people. Stand by us, citizens, and it shall be done."

Thus defiant, Meagher passes over with the deputation from the Confederation to Paris, where he meets Lamartine, only to find the man of the fiery pen a man of prudence and policy. This did not prevent him, however, from talking treason to the new leaders of the French. If Lamartine was cold, Ledru Rollin favored the despatch of instant assistance to the Irish. Attending the opera, frequenting the cafés, Meagher thought only of his country. The signs of the revolution in Paris were still fresh. The barricades were hardly down. The wounded patriots still lingered in the hospitals—their rooms filled with the fragrance of flowers. And Meagher hurried home.

IV

Meanwhile the followers of the Confederation throughout Ireland were busily engaged in preparing for the conflict of arms which seemed inevitable. All,

who could, purchased guns and ammunition, and the poor saved their money, deprived themselves, and bought pikes. During the early months of '48 Dublin once more began to take on something of the dignity of an industrial community, albeit the one prevailing industry appeared to be the manufacture of pikes. Meagher and Mitchell were compelled to share in popularity with David Hyland—Pike Maker. No one familiar with the situation could fail to know that an armed conflict was inevitable, that a crisis was impending. While the government of the Castle was entirely cognizant of the conspiracy of the revolutionists who made no serious effort to conceal their purpose, it contented itself at this juncture by passing the "treason-felony act" which gave it the power to exile for natural life any one found guilty of sedition.

Taking advantage of the cat and mouse policy of the government, Meagher and his compatriots determined upon the holding of a series of meetings throughout the island for the purpose of arousing the people and organizing them for the uprising. The first of this historic series of meetings was held under the auspices of the Sarsfield Club at Limerick in honor of "The Prosecuted Patriots," for Meagher, Mitchell and O'Brien had not yet been tried. It was while the festivities were in progress that a mob composed of the Old Irelanders, who had worshiped at the shrine of O'Connell, gathered outside the banquet hall, made an attack upon the building, breaking the windows with stones. O'Brien, going to the door to remonstrate, was struck by a flying missile. This cowardly attack by Irishmen upon men who were endangering their lives and liberties to serve the national cause so infuriated

Meagher that his speech on this occasion surpassed in seditious sentiments anything he had ever said before.

"Yes, from this day out," he exclaimed, "you must lie down and eat your words. Yes, you—you starved wretch, lying naked in that ditch, with clenched teeth and staring eye, gazing on the clouds that redden with the flames in which your hovel is consumed—what matters it that the claw of hunger is fastening in your heart—what matters it that the hot poison of the fever is shooting through your brain—what matters it that the tooth of the lean dog is cutting through the bone of that dead child of which you were once the guardian—what matters it that the lips of that specter there, once the pride and beauty of the village where you wooed and won her as your bride, are blackened with the blood of the youngest to which she has given birth—what matters it that the golden grain which sprung from the sweat you squandered on the soil has been torn from your grasp—what matters it that you are thus pained and stung—thus lashed and maddened? Hush—beat back the passion that rushes to your heart—die—die without a groan—die without a struggle—die without a cry—for the government which starves you desires to live in peace."

The next meeting was to be at Waterford, the native place of the most eloquent orator of the militants, and learning of the indignity to which Meagher and O'Brien had been subjected at Limerick, the patriots of Waterford marched in an immense concourse to Carrick to meet and welcome them on the way. Every mile was a triumph, every moment an ovation. It was on such occasions as this that Meagher shone at his best. The vast crowd, the tumult, the concentrated passion, called forth the dramatic instinct which was a predominant trait of his character. As the throng

was entering Waterford it passed along the quay where a British man-of-war was moored. With a theatrical gesture, and a contemptuous glance at the man-of-war, Meagher halted the procession, saying that "he would select that place whence to remind his hearers that their country was not in their own hands—that it was held by force."

The meeting in Waterford was a monster one and here Meagher, knowing of the presence of the spies, boldly urged upon the people the necessity of procuring arms at once. This advice, given with an effrontery that must have staggered the sycophants of the Castle, was repeated at Kilkenny, where the orators were magnificently received.

Following these meetings Meagher returned to Dublin for his trial. On the way to the court he was accompanied by the clubs of the Confederation—the whole of Dublin one seething mass of determined and defiant men. The jury in the trial of both Meagher and O'Brien had been packed. Nevertheless, enough decent patriotic men slipped into the jury box to hang the jury. Walking proudly from the room sacrilegiously called the court of justice, Meagher placed himself at the head of the procession of the waiting clubs and led it on its ominous march through the streets to the headquarters of the Confederation, where he voiced an indignant protest against any attempt to pack the jury in the case of Mitchell. Indeed the Confederation seriously considered the feasibility of a rescue in the event of his conviction and but for the fear of Meagher that such an undertaking might react seriously upon the cause this doubtless would have been done.

The expected happened. The jury was notoriously

packed against Mitchell, who was convicted in accordance with instructions from the government. The scene which followed at Newgate—the Irish bastile—beggars description. All the approaches were guarded with soldiers, police and lancers. The streets fairly swarmed with infuriated patriots. But for the decision of the leaders to attempt no rescue, these men in the streets, aflame with hate, with arms concealed upon their persons, could have swept soldiers, police and lancers into perdition. The speech of Mitchell from the dock aroused the fighting blood of the men in the room, and the spirit spread like wild fire into the crowd outside. Terrified by the mutterings, petrified by the scowls of the people, the officials attempted to push Mitchell through the doorway and into a rear room to prevent a rescue. This indignity was too much for some of his friends, who made a rush toward him. It might have been the beginning of the end. It would have been but for the advice of Meagher. From the realization of this fact Meagher was never after able to escape.

At a great mass meeting which followed the deportation of the patriot editor and agitator, the orator exonerated the Confederation and took upon himself the blame. They who would condemn—and many have—must ascribe Meagher's action to the head and not the heart. No tenderer words have ever fallen from mortal tongue than those in which he took upon himself the blame, and the famous passage beginning with the words, "There is a black ship upon the southern seas to-night," gave to posterity a tribute to John Mitchell that has never been surpassed in beauty or in eloquence. It is well for Irishmen to know that Mitch-

ell understood. The love these two men bore each other was that of brothers.

The deportation of Mitchell, however, nerved the Confederation to final action. It was swiftly followed by a formal conspiracy. The council of the Confederation became a revolutionary committee. The decision was reached to throw down the gauntlet to the government after the ripening of the harvest, but the government, now seriously concerned, determined to act, and the leaders of Young Ireland were arrested.

The officers with their warrant found the most brilliant of the leaders at the home of his father in Waterford, where he was placed under arrest. The news spread throughout the city that Meagher had fallen into the hands of the watch-dogs of the Castle. The chapel bells were rung. The people poured into the streets at the sound of the tocsin as in the days of the Parisian revolution. One word passed from lip to lip—"rescue," "rescue," "rescue." One approving nod from the young orator, and the officers of the Castle would have been as helpless as a leaf on a raging sea.

Meagher appeared at the window and appealed to the people to desist—only to retire despairing of success. Once more he undertook the task of calming the multitude which by this time had taken on the character of a revolutionary mob, and this time his pleading had some effect.

Meanwhile a military force had arrived upon the scene and been drawn up before the house—a handful of men against an army. Messengers brought the word now that the sturdy men of Carrick-on-Suir were on the march to meet the arrested leader and his mili-

tary escort to do battle, and Meagher despatched friends to dissuade them and turn them back.

At six o'clock a carriage drew up at the house. The young hero made a last passionate and affectionate appeal to his fellow townsmen to refrain from violence, the dragoons formed on either side of the vehicle with drawn swords, and followed by one solid mass of sullen humanity the procession started through the streets of the city in which all the shops had been closed as a tribute to the genius of its favorite son. Old men and young, with tears streaming down their cheeks, held forth appealing arms toward the carriage, crying piteously, "Give us the word. For God's sake give us the word."

That trip to Dublin must have shaken the faith of the government in the loyalty of the people. Time and again Meagher was forced to leave the carriage to plead with the people who were determined that the travesty of the Mitchell case should not be re-enacted. After reaching the capital and giving bond, he was picked up bodily, and on the backs of the cheering populace he was carried through the streets, pulsating with revolutionary passion, to his hotel, where he appeared at the window and delivered what was destined to be his last speech in Dublin.

Almost immediately Meagher left Dublin in the hope of arousing the people of the south. Looming two thousand four hundred feet above the plain of Femhan about midway between the towns of Clonmel and Carrick-on-Suir, is the famous mountain of Slievenamon where, according to tradition, an ancient Irish chief once sat upon a stone seat and watched his warriors

engaged in the chase upon the plains below. It was from this inspiring eminence that Cromwell surveyed the country and exclaimed, "That is a country worth fighting for." Here, on July sixteenth, 1848, was held the most impressive meeting associated with the uprising of '48. The word had gone forth that Meagher and his compatriots would here make answer to the government of the Castle. It was Sunday—a day of insufferable heat. Meeting at Carrick, the clubs of the Confederation marched in military order to the mountain. The people came from the counties of Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford—pushing their way over the roads to the mountain packed with sweltering men, women and children. The soldiers at Carrick were under arms, but the people, thoroughly aroused, paid no heed, but pressed up the steep ascent.

It was a theatrical Meagher that appeared before the countless multitude. He wore a green cap with a gold band, and a splendid tri-colored sash was wrapped about him. His oration on this occasion was one of the most magnificent of his career. Looking down upon the old men who had followed O'Connell, he said:

"O'Connell, like all great men, had his faults—but he had his virtues and he had his victories. This I will say, that he preached a cause that we are bound to see out. He used to say, 'I may not see what I have labored for. I am an old man—my arm is withered—my epitaph of victory may mark my grave—but I see a younger generation with red blood in their veins, and they will do the work.'"

Here the orator paused to note the effect while a roar of applause echoed from the mountain. Then with a sweeping gesture he added:

"Therefore it is my ambition to decorate these hills with the flag of my country."

Thus did he make his appeal for the amalgamation of Old and Young Ireland in behalf of the liberty of Ireland. Then he followed with a passage of classic eloquence:

"A scourge came from God that ought to have stirred you to greater action. The potato was smitten; but your fields waved with golden grain. It was not for you. To your lips it was forbidden fruit. The ships came and bore it away, and when the price rose it came back, but not for the victims whose lips grew pale, and quivered —and opened no more."

It is recorded by those present that this reference to the deadly work of the famine, when men, women and children starved in the midst of plenty, created a sensation in the crowd—to many of whom the vivid picture suggested a loved one starved through the cruel indifference of the government.

"Did I say they opened no more?" he added, after a pause. "Yes, they did open in Heaven to accuse your rulers. Those lips, fresh and beautiful with the light of God, supplicated His throne, and He has blessed our cause. The fact is plain that this land, which is yours by nature and by God's gift, is not yours by the law of the land. There were bayonets therefore between the people and their rightful food."

Thus with a master touch the orator reached the heart, and thus he tried to steel the arm of the people. The spies hurried reports of the meeting to Dublin, and the authorities of the Castle, in a panic of fear, hastened to issue the order that precipitated the clash

—the order to the people to give up their arms. Accepting the challenge with alacrity, Meagher instantly met it with a counter-order to the people to stand by their arms and await the commands of their leaders. Wherever the order of the Castle was found—there side by side was the order of Thomas Francis Meagher. Thus was the issue made so clear that even the blind could see and understand.

V

Meanwhile, in the absence of Meagher the council of the Irish Confederation met in Dublin to determine upon what course of action to pursue. The rank and file of the clubs, the masses of the people, appeared to favor an immediate appeal to arms, but O'Brien thought them unprepared to try conclusions with the trained militia, and upon the motion of John Dillon the members of the clubs were instructed to retain and conceal their arms. On the twenty-ninth of July a committee was appointed to assume absolute control of the revolutionary movement, a committee with functions somewhat similar to the committee of public safety during the French Revolution. Meagher was placed at the head of this committee, the other members being John Dillon, Richard O'Gorman, Thomas D. McGee and Thomas D. Reilly. The revolution at this juncture seemed a certainty and the spirits of the leaders ran high with joyous anticipation. But alas, the committee was destined never to meet!

Immediately after its organization O'Gorman left for Limerick to take charge of the movement there, and a little later the tip was passed on to the leaders

still lingering in Dublin of the intention of the government to suspend the writ of habeas corpus. Confronted with this ominous danger, Meagher, McGee and Dillon held a hurried meeting in the council room and an emissary was despatched to Paris to plead for intervention, another was sent to Belfast and thence to Glasgow, where at the proper moment he was to arouse the Irish there and lead them against the troops stationed in that city. This accomplished, Meagher spread out the map of Ireland and entered into a conference with Halpin, the secretary of the Confederation, who was instructed to communicate at once with the officers of the clubs of the capital and direct them to be ready to rise and barricade the streets the moment the news was received that the leaders were in the field.

Owing to the absence of war vessels and its proximity to the fighting counties of Wexford, Waterford and Tipperary it was agreed that the insurrection should be launched in Kilkenny. Another reason for the selection was that Kilkenny was on the eve of its annual cattle show and it was thought that in the event of a siege the possession of the cattle would be an item worth considering.

The news spread rapidly that the leaders of Young Ireland were in the field and the militant young patriots of Dublin awaited expectantly and eagerly the instructions that never came. They had been told to await the orders of their leaders and no orders were received. Halpin had not understood the instructions given him by Meagher. The weapons remained concealed. The pikes, purchased and preserved for the patriots' hour, were never used.

Meanwhile the leaders in the field were battling against disheartening odds. Smith O'Brien was at Carrick, where the entire country was aglow with revolutionary heat and the people were clamoring to be led, when an element of discord was injected into the situation. The precise source of this discordant note may never be known. Suffice it to say that the traitors to the cause of the nation succeeded in persuading the people that Carrick alone would be expected to grapple with the government and that the annihilation of the town and its people would be the inevitable result. So pronounced did this feeling become that it was considered a concession when the leaders were granted permission to remain in the town overnight. Word was then sent out at once to all the clubs of the neighboring towns to meet at Carrick on the morrow.

With this understanding Meagher set out in the night for Waterford with the intention of placing himself at the head of one thousand sturdy fighting men who had pledged themselves to be ready to follow him in any enterprise at the slightest notice. Reaching his native city he sent for his leaders. To his chagrin he was informed that they could not accompany him back to Carrick without the consent of Father Tracy, who had been instrumental in their organization. The perplexed leader hurriedly scoured the city in search of the priest, but he was not found, and finally, in discouragement and despair, Meagher turned his back upon the town of his nativity, and the great majority of his men never knew that he had called upon them in the crisis and called in vain.

It was thus that the insurrection failed. A succession of unexplainable blunders accounts, to some ex-

tent, for the failure of the people to rise—Halpin's blunder preventing the attack of the Dublin clubs upon the Castle, the blunder of Father Tracy—if blunder it was—depriving Meagher of the one thousand men upon whom he had depended as the nucleus of his army. That there were some weaklings among the men is probable and that traitors abounded in the clubs and among the people is certain. The plans of the insurrectionists miscarried at every turn, and the leaders, in dismay and bewilderment, failing of the support upon which they had reason to rely, separated, each to seek as best he might the security of his person. Some sought and found the succor of the sea and entered upon a voluntary exile, while others fell into the hands of the government and faced the ignominy of the scaffold as so many Irish heroes had done before.

Among the latter was Thomas Francis Meagher, who was arrested at Rathgannon on August twelfth. A little more than two months later he was tried before a jury notoriously packed at Clonmel Court House, where he was doomed to die the most cruel and ignominious death for the crime of loving the liberty of his country. Throughout this crisis he remained worthy of his rôle as one of Ireland's most exalted. Dressed with his customary neatness in a plain black frock coat, black silk stock and light colored waistcoat, he faced his accusers with dignity and firmness; and when asked why sentence of death should not be pronounced he made his famous last speech in Ireland:

"I am here to speak the truth, whatever it may cost me," he said. "I am here to regret nothing I have ever done—to retract nothing I have ever said. I am here to crave with no lying lip the life I consecrate to the lib-

erty of my country. Far from it; even here—here where the thief, the libertine, the murderer have left their footprints in the dust; here on this spot, where the shadows of death surround me, and from which I see my early grave in an unanointed soil—encircled with these terrors, the hope which has beckoned me to the perilous sea upon which I have been wrecked still consoles, animates, enraptures me."

Whether it was a compassion for the youth of the leaders of Young Ireland, or the warning of a conscience because of the infamy of their undoing must remain to conjecture, but the death sentences were changed to deportation for life, and on July ninth, 1849, Thomas Francis Meagher, one of the most brilliant ornaments of Erin, was borne from the scene of his many triumphs and his one great failure to the dismal quietude of Van Dieman's Land.

VI

The story of Meagher's life in exile is briefly told. To one of his ardent and restless nature the monotonous humdrum of existence in the No-Man's Land of the far-away seas must have been one unspeakable ennui. While in his solitude at Lake Sorrel he luxuriated in yachting in a little boat which he tenderly called *The Speranza* in honor of one of the fiery poets of '48. There on the lake he divided his time between the water and the few books of his attractive cottage. There, in the spring of '51, he was married to Miss Bennett, the beautiful daughter of a farmer of the locality. Thence, in the early winter of '52, he made his escape, and, after many exciting adventures on the

sea, he landed in New York City—the land of his dreams—on May twenty-sixth.

Henceforth his story is part of American history. The first nine years of his life in exile were devoted to lecturing and writing. His brilliant and picturesque eloquence and the interest felt in him as one of the apostles of liberty created a demand for him upon the platform. He appeared frequently in all the large cities and made a tour of the newer western country, where his fame had spread. A year after his arrival in New York he joined John Mitchell in the publication of a new journal called *The Citizen*, which immediately took precedence over all other papers dedicated to the cause of liberty in Ireland. In 1858 he made a tour of Central America for *Harper's Magazine*, writing a series of articles on *Holidays in Costa Rico* that possess a magic charm, although they have never been printed in book form. And then came the assault on Fort Sumter—and the American Republic was torn by cruel strife. The brilliant dashing part played by Meagher as the commander of the Irish Brigade must be read in the hero tales of American history. The marvelous charge of Meagher's men with a green sprig in their caps at Fredericksburg is one of the most stirring military movements in the history of the world. He surrendered his commission when the last of his brave men were gone—the victims of their valor.

At the close of the war he was appointed secretary of the territory of Montana by President Johnson and he set to work to rid the territory of the political corruptionists who then infested it. Unhappily he did not live to carry out his plans. While on one of his tours

of inspection he fell from a boat into the swift current of the Missouri River near Fort Benton and his body was never recovered. Thus it was, that Thomas Francis Meagher, one of the most brilliant and heroic characters in the calendar of time, died on July first, 1867.

Of Meagher it may be truly said that his entire life was dedicated to the cause of liberty. Wherever he was placed he found work to do, and he possessed the genius to meet his obligations. His speech on the sword alone entitles him to a high place among the orators of his century. His relations to the rising of '48 would alone make him a treasured memory whereever freedom has a worshiper. His superb gallantry at Fredericksburg alone would assure him a place in history as among the bravest of the brave.

Orator, protagonist, soldier, dreamer and doer, Thomas Francis Meagher will live in the affection of his race as long as the green hills of old Ireland loom above the waves.

VII

Thomas Francis Meagher, unlike several of the great Irish orators, was bountifully blessed by nature, and peculiarly fitted for the platform. Presenting an impressive appearance, his slender and compact form of graceful mien, not a little was contributed to the thrilling effects he produced by the flash of his Celtic eye, and the rare melody of his musical voice. It would be a mistake to assume that his art was not a studied one, that it was wholly spontaneous. While naturally gifted with a sense of the dramatic, he so thoroughly appreciated the value of the theatrical in

appealing to a mass of men that he sought and found the opportunity to utilize it in his art. If we are to credit the records that have come down from those who often heard him in the heyday of his power he was marvelously expressive in gesture. Added to these acquired advantages, he had the oratorical temperament and he spoke with a fire that was convincing as to the intensity of his convictions. In other words, his hearers always knew that there was a mind and heart and soul behind the burning and poetic words that flowed with such wonderful fluency from his lips. No one has ever known better the human heart, and he played upon it like the master that he was. Perhaps the predominant phase of his oratory was its tremendous intensity. This may be accounted for in part by the fact that he was always addressing his fellow men upon the most serious of subjects—their liberties, their rights. In the days of '48 there was little occasion for the lighter touches of oratorical entertainment. After his dramatic arrest and return to Dublin, when the multitude, after he had given bond, accompanied him to his hotel, he permitted himself an indulgence in some humorous references to his "military escort" and his inability to establish fraternal relations with the soldiery, but with this exception, his speeches are singularly without humor. That this absence of wit and humor was premeditated may properly be deduced from the fact that he was exquisitely witty in conversation, and possessed to a high degree the sense of humor. The wrongs he fought impressed him as too serious for laughter and he attacked the enemy with his heavy artillery.

He was a master of denunciation, endowed with a

vast vocabulary of invective, and he knew how to make a terrific arraignment as well as any man in the history of Ireland. The passages smacking of his philippic were usually brief, but concise and comprehensive and all the more intense on that account. Take for example his denunciation of the English lords in his speech on *The Growth of the National Spirit*:

"Those English lords who never trod on Irish soil—who know not the afflictions of the people whose character they defame—who never sympathized with those whom they would now coerce; those English lords, in whose pictured galleries we would vainly search for the stricken image of an Irish peasant, and on whose damasked tables the Irish famine will not cast its scaring shadow; those English lords to whom the Irish millions, on the day of retribution, will address the words of sacred accusation, 'We were naked and you clothed us not; we were hungry and you gave us not bread; we were thirsty and you gave us not drink;' those English lords, at this day, renew the enactments that have long since brought down upon the English supremacy the curse of the Irish province."

One of the most vicious and telling of his philippics followed the imprisonment of O'Brien by the English house of commons in an address at a mass meeting in Dublin:

"Till now I have thought it was unEnglish to strike a man when he was down. Till now I thought that, whether in the grave or in the prison, the foe of England was safe from insult. Till now, I thought the vanquished ever claimed her sympathy, and that, in the flush of her triumph, her spirit was great, because it was forbearing.

"Sir, the conduct of England in this instance does not

remind me of that country which an old history of some centuries has taught me to admire. It does not remind me of that England, with the arms and letters of which the names of the Alfreds, the Edwards, the Russells, the Miltons and the Hampdens are associated. It does not remind me of that England by whose sword Spain was rescued and Portugal was set free. It does not remind me of that England whose guns at Navarino gave succor to the Greek, and on whose soil the Polish insurrectionist has found a refuge. But I am reminded of that England whose flag was planted in this country by a Wentworth, a Carhampton, a Ludlow and a Cromwell —that flag in which the dead liberties of our country, as in a red shroud, have been bound up. I am reminded of that England whose assassin-blade massacred at Mullaghmast, and whose traitor heart broke faith at Limerick. I am reminded of that England by whom the Irish noble has been dishonored and the Irish peasant has been starved."

To appreciate the genius of Meagher, however, it is necessary to go beyond his passages of fierce arraignment. There have been others quite as adept in this field of Irish oratory, and perhaps more so, but few of these have coupled with the power to denounce, the capacity to appeal to the imagination and the senses in sentences of lyrical beauty. In this latter art none approach him unless it be Curran and Sheil—the latter being the favorite master of Meagher. If he had not dedicated his life to the cause of liberty and adopted oratory as the weapon, he might have been a musician or a poet. He had a remarkable sense of rhythm, a vivid imagination, making it natural for him to teach through pictures of rare coloring. His word pictures are prose poems—literary gems, albeit the very exuberance of his fancy sometimes led him into er-

rors in taste. His apostrophe to the sword, however, has a fine literary tone which appeals to the most fastidious critics. It is as lyrical as song. Suggestive of this apostrophe is another passage of splendid beauty:

"By the soft blue waters of Lake Lucerne stands the chapel of William Tell. On the anniversary of his revolt and victory across those waters, as they glitter in the July sun, skim the light boats of the allied cantons. From the prows hang the banners of the republic, and, as they near the sacred spot, the daughters of Lucerne chant the hymns of their old poetic land. Then burst forth the grand *Te Deum,* and Heaven hears again the voice of that wild chivalry of the mountains which, five centuries since, pierced the white eagle of Vienna and flung it bleeding on the rocks of Uri.

"At Innsbruck, in the black aisles of the old cathedrals, the peasant of the Tyrol kneels before the statue of Andreas Hofer. In the defiles and valleys of the Tyrol, who forgets the day on which he fell before the walls of Mantua? It is a festive day all through his quiet noble land. In the old cathedral his inspiring memory is recalled amid the pageantry of the altar, his image appears in every house, his victories and virtue are proclaimed in the songs of the people, and when the sun goes down a chain of fires, in the deep red light of which the eagle spreads his wings and holds his giddy revelry, proclaims the glory of the chief whose blood has made his native land a sainted spot in Europe.

"Sir, shall we not join in this glorious worship and here, in this island, anointed by the blood of many a good and gallant man, shall we not have the faith, the duties, the festivities of patriotism?"

Surely no one but one imbued with poetic fire could have painted that picture, almost religious in its appeal. It was introduced almost as a diversion in the midst of a speech of argument and denunciation, lulling and

soothing for a moment the senses of the hearers, until the closing sentences showed that it had a practical purpose. This was a trick for which Meagher had a fondness, and is again found in the midst of his speech on *The Irish Confederation:*

"Yes, the spirit that nerved the Red Hand of Ulster —the spirit that made the walls of Limerick impregnable and forced the conquerors of the Boyne to negotiate by the waters of the Shannon—the spirit that dictated the letters of Swift and the instructions of Lucas—the spirit that summoned the armed missionaries of freedom to the altar of Dungannon and gave to Charlemont a dignity his accomplishments would never have attained—the spirit that touched with fire the tongue of Grattan and made the lyre of Moore vibrate through the world —the spirit that called forth the genius of Davis from the cloisters of old Trinity and which consecrates his grave—the spirit that at this day in the city of the Pontiff unfurls the flag of Sarsfield and animates the Irish sculptor as he bids the marble speak the passion of the Irish Tribune—this spirit, which the bayonet could not drive back, which the bribe could not satiate, which misfortune could not quell, is moving vividly through the land. The ruins that ennoble, the scenes that beautify, the memories that illuminate, the music that inspires our native land, have preserved it pure amidst the vicious factions of the past and the venal bargains of later years. The visitation that now storms upon the land has startled it into a generous activity. Did public virtue cease to animate, the senate house, which even in its desecrated state lends an Italian glory to this metropolis, would forbid it to expire. The temple is there—the creed has been announced—the priests will enter and officiate. It shall be so. The spirit of nationality, rooted in our hearts, is as immovable as the altar of the Druid, pillared in our soil."

In view of the imaginative character and the senti-

mentality of the Celt, the effect of such beautiful pictures and memories can readily be understood. His pictures, at their best, were merely meant to illustrate an argument. He appealed to the masses as Rienzi did, only he used words where the Italian tribune resorted to canvas.

Like all great agitators and protagonists with a righteous cause, who are confronted with the apathy or indifference of the people, he resorted to the electric shock of withering them with scorn to galvanize them into action. Very seldom did he flatter his audience. His purpose was not to contribute to their complacency but to plant within them the seed of dissatisfaction, and this he did by interjecting into his speeches the most caustic comment upon their condition. An example of his method in this direction may be cited from his speech on the husting during the Galway election in 1846:

"Will you vilely verify the anticipations of Chesham Place? Will you basely authenticate the predictions of the Castle? Renounced by Cashel, threatened by Wexford, supplanted in Dundalk, routed from Mayo, what—shall the refugees of Whiggery find in Galway a spot where, at last, the gold of the cabinet will contaminate the virtue of the people?

"The eyes of Europe are upon you. This is the cant of every husting. But this I tell you: THERE ARE A FEW MEN YET BREATHING IN SKIBBEREEN AND THEIR DEATH GLANCE IS UPON YOU. Vote for the Whig candidate AND THEIR LAST SHRIEK WILL PROCLAIM THAT YOU HAVE VOTED FOR THE PENSIONED MISERS WHO REFUSED THEM BREAD.

"There is a place, too, called Skull, in the county of Cork, the churchyard of which place, as a tenant told

his landlord the other day, is the only 'red field' in the wide, wide county. There are eyes wild with the agony of hunger looking out from that fell spot upon you, and if you vote against your native land, THE BURNING TONGUE OF THE STARVING PEASANT WILL FROTH ITS CURSE UPON YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN."

One of his most crushing criticisms of his own people is to be found in his speech on *The Spirit of the North,* delivered at Belfast. In this speech he shamed the people with a striking contrast, setting off the people of Switzerland against the people of Ireland. After relating the limited resources, the natural disadvantages of the little republic of the Alps, and picturing their splendid and triumphant emergence from their difficulties by virtue of their courage, determination and independence, he turned upon his audience:

"And you—you who are eight million strong—you who boast at every meeting that this island is the finest that the sun looks down upon—you who have no threatening sea to stem, no avalanche to dread—you who say that you could shield along your coast a thousand sail, and be the princes of a mighty commerce—you who by the magic of an honest hand beneath each summer sky might cull a plenteous harvest from your soil, and with the sickle strike away the scythe of death—you who have no vulgar history to read—you who can trace from field to field the evidence of a civilization older than the conquest, the relics of a religion more ancient than the gospel—you who have thus been blessed, thus been gifted, thus been prompted to what is wise and generous and great—you will make no effort—you will whine and beg and skulk, in sores and rags, upon this favored land—you will congregate in drowsy councils and, when the very earth is loosening beneath your feet, respectfully

suggest new clauses and amendments to some blundering bill—you will strike the poor rate, aye, fifteen shillings to the pound—you will mortgage the last acre of your estates—you will bid a prosperous voyage to your last grain of corn—you will be beggared by the million—you will perish by the thousand—and the finest island that the sun looks down upon, amid the jeers and hootings of the world, will blacken into a plague spot, a wilderness, a sepulcher. God of Heaven, shall these things come to pass? What say you, yeomen of the north? Has the Red Hand withered?"

Sometimes he found in history something to inspire the Irish heart and animate Irish pride and awaken Irish hope. Speaking at Cork he said:

"A French historian has written that, after the terrible eruption of Vesuvius in 1794, which swept away villages and flocks, and palaces and vineyards, the olive trees that grew at the base of the mountain were found, amidst the wilderness of ashes, fresh and green and vigorous. Thus, after the visitation which through the cold bleak winter swept across the island, strewing the fields with thousands of our people, where the previous harvest a few weeks before waved and glittered like a golden banner—spreading desolation from the hills of Innishowen to the shore of Bantry, ghastlier than that with which the swarthy Sythian, rushing from the black shores of the Danube, scourged the plains of Lombardy—ghastlier than that through which the fiery Schismatic of Arabia, propagating his dazzling and voluptuous gospel, burned his way from the valley of Zeder to the gates of Mecca—ghastlier than that which the Venetian renegade gazed upon by Lepanto's gulf when he watched—

"'—the lean dogs beneath the wall
Hold o'er the dead their carnival'

—thus, after this tremendous visitation, which men had

said would sink this country in despair, the fine old spirit is found still living in the land—pure, active, brilliant—brighter from the torture through which it passed—stronger from the calamity with which it struggled. Thus, Sir, we find that the heart of Ireland is proof against the worst."

His historic view of the consummation of the union, incorporated in an address before the Grattan Club, is suggestive of some of the finest descriptive passages of Macaulay—a word picture that might well have been written by the pen that painted the scene at the impeachment of Warren Hastings:

"A night, darker than that which fell upon the land of Egypt when the Israelite stretched forth his hand to Heaven and no man knew his brother, came quickly down. Yet high above the senate house the star still shone, keeping there its appointed watch, looking down upon the island of whose deliverance it had been the herald, 'faithful to her freedom, faithful to her fall.'

"In that hall where, in the presence of the students of her ancient university, in the presence of the peers and peeresses of the kingdom, the Irish Commoners, with swords upon their thighs, had pledged their fortunes and their lives that no English laws should be obeyed in Ireland—the solemn oath, the splendid ceremony, the faith, the chivalry, the genius of the revolution, were that night forsworn.

"Noble and learned highwaymen called ministers—right honorable and learned slaves, barristers and redcoats by profession, perjurers by trade—these with a retinue of ayes amongst them—when the senate house was sacked a heap of coronets and borough prices would be parceled out—these criminals entered there that night to do the work of conquest, and they did it with impunity. An English regiment lined the colonnade—Napper Tandy was in exile—the guns of the Leinster Volunteers were

spiked—Wolfe Tone had bled to death in shackles—in vain did Curran, leaning against one of the stately pillars of the portico, ask the 'rebel' who stood beside him—'Where now are your one hundred thousand men?'"

The fondness for the surprise stinger at the end of a period is manifested in numerous passages, as in his picture of the little stream of corruption that is always dropping through the Castle yards, and in election times has an extraordinary spring tide, widening and deepening, rushing rapidly, sweeping away the votes of the people, and finally "throwing up a Whig official upon the white shore of England." As in a passage in the speech at the complimentary banquet to an American sea captain who had brought a boat load of provisions for the starving of Ireland, in which the orator suggests the question of the stranger as to the reason for the high festival in the midst of desolation and death, and answers it: "Sir, the citizens of Dublin have met to pay a compliment to a plain citizen of America, which they would not pay, no, not for all the gold of Venice—to the minister of England."

The passion of Meagher, his rapid-fire method of attack, his exceptional capacity for condensation, his extraordinary ability to paint a picture, to find an illuminating analogy, to draw an indictment, to run the gamut of emotions, to coin a phrase, to crucify with a characterization, make him unique even among the Irish orators. Added to this, his wonderful vocabulary, his mastery of the music of words, the exalted lyrical quality of his finest passages, impart to his speeches a literary tone that is lacking in some of Ireland's more virile orators.

VIII

ISAAC BUTT

The Long Lean Years; the Fenian Brotherhood; the Amnesty Association; the Organization and Early Days of the Home-Rule Movement

THE period intervening between the downfall of the Young Ireland movement and the appearance of the Parnell movement was one of the most dismal and discouraging in the history of the long war for legislative independence. The fate that befell O'Connell's plan for a constitutional agitation for the repeal of the union had discredited constitutionalism in the minds of the masses; and the ease with which the uprising of '48 was put down disclosed the difficulty of accomplishing anything by force of arms. The only spectacular feature of these long lean years was the Fenian movement, and it, too, was suppressed with an iron hand. Aside from the Manchester martyrs, the popular imagination was not fired to any appreciable degree by any great popular leader.

And yet there was a leader whose political and professional activities linked Young Ireland with Parnellism—a leader more practical than Meagher and infinitely more eloquent than Parnell. He stood beside Smith O'Brien as he received the brutal sentence of the court. He battled for four years, with a courage almost equal to that of Curran, to save the unfortunates

who were caught in the dragnet of Fenianism. Indeed, the brilliancy, the eloquence, the courage and capacity he exhibited in defense of his Fenian clients can only be compared with the efforts of Curran in defense of the victims of '98. And he went further than Curran —he followed and fought for his clients after the prison doors had clanged upon them. In behalf of Erin he capitalized their conviction. He aroused and organized the country to a united and determined effort to obtain their release. And when he had awakened the people from their timid lethargy through the activities of the Amnesty Association he had conceived, he directed his attention to the perfection of a political organization to continue the fight for the restoration of a parliament in College Green.

The word "Home Rule" was given to the vocabulary of British politics by Isaac Butt.

The few years during which he led the Home-Rule party in the house of commons were not prolific of results. He modeled with faulty clay—the best available from his resources. But he did create a party, he did revive a drooping hope, he did compel the English statesmen to reckon again with Ireland, and he did go ahead through the seeming wilderness, facing and fighting the battle of the pioneer, to blaze the path the more militant Parnell was to tread to more spectacular triumphs.

Brilliant, brainy, lovable—a charming character, an entertaining genius, a pure patriot, a politician and a gentleman—Isaac Butt performed the thankless task of leading a forlorn hope and paid the penalty of his failure with a broken heart. But as the years have gone and men have looked back upon the splendid pre-

paratory work he did, the impression has grown that among the great and brilliant men of Ireland, none is more richly deserving of the gratitude and remembrance of the little green isle than Isaac Butt.

I

There was little in the early environment or education of Isaac Butt to give promise of the splendid spirit of nationality which dominated the latter years of his life. He was born in Ulster—in the home of a Presbyterian minister. He first looked out upon the world from the village of Glenfin on September sixth, 1813. His early years were spent near the Gap of Barnesmore, a line of hills, picturesque and beautiful, albeit draped in shadows. Upon these hills the boy was wont to look and dream, and it was under the inspiration of their mystery that his imagination, which always imparted something of poetry to his temperament, was developed. His father appears to have been a prosy type of preacher, in no sense inspirational. His mother, however, was a woman of rare mentality and originality, clever as a conversationalist, and highly imaginative, and it was from her that Isaac Butt inherited his genius.

Of his early education we know little beyond the fact that he studied at the Royal School, Raphoe, and entered Trinity College in 1832. Here his genius flowered, and he entered upon a career which has probably never been surpassed, if equaled, in the history of that venerable institution. In 1835 he took his first degree, and one year later he became a LL.B. In 1840 he became an M. A. and a LL.D. And while he was

taking these degrees he was not burying himself completely in the text-books, but was feverishly active outside the curriculum. It was while he was a student at Trinity that he published a translation of the "Georgics" of Virgil and other classics. While still an undergraduate he founded the *Dublin University Magazine,* and, while acting as editor, wrote copiously on political and economic subjects and found the time to contribute the series of graceful and pensive stories under the title of *Chapters of College Romance.* Nor did this limit his college activities. He plunged with eagerness into the work of the famous Historical Society which has played so prominent a part in the oratorical development of so many of the subjects treated in this book. Devoting himself with remarkable assiduity to the development of an oratorical style, participating with exceptional brilliancy in the debates, he almost immediately took first rank among the students.

That he made a profound impression upon the faculty may be properly deduced from his appointment to the professorship of political economy in 1836—before he had completed his studies—and he continued to lecture during the next five years. It was during the period of his professorship that his attention was first directed to the imperative necessity of some radical remedial legislation relative to the land. It was the custom of Parnell, in later years, to characterize his predecessor in the leadership of the Irish party as "Professor." Fortunate it was for Ireland that Butt's professorial duties directed his studies into the channel of land legislation.

Meanwhile he was preparing himself for the practise

of law, and when, in 1841, he severed his connection both with the college and the magazine to concentrate his energies upon his profession, he almost immediately found himself with a large and lucrative clientele. In his thirty-first year he was made a Queen's Counsel.

It was during the first years of his practise that Butt began to succumb to the blandishments of politics—a trade peculiarly fascinating to the Irish temperament, and holding forth promise of rich reward to one of his ability and political proclivities. It is not to be wondered that Butt entered politics as a pronounced reactionary, as a champion of the ascendency and an outspoken enemy of the project of repeal. He had long breathed the loyal air of Ulster. He had been nurtured in an ultra-conservative household. The leisure hours of his Dublin life had been largely spent within the eminently respectable and reactionary precincts of the Dublin Conservative Society, which regularly met in a house in Dawson Street to direct a counter agitation against the Repeal Association. His friends and affiliations were mostly among the gentry, where patriotism was subordinated to self-interest. His first important cause was confided to him by the old corporation of Dublin, which sent him as junior counsel, in 1840, to plead their case at the bar of the house of lords, and while he failed to persuade that body to repeal the Municipal Reform bill, he increased his reputation as a lawyer of resource and erudition and an orator of more than ordinary persuasiveness and plausibility.

Thus it was that Isaac Butt became the hope and darling of the Dublin conservatives—and thus came

his selection by the loyalists in 1843 to measure swords with the great O'Connell—then at the height of his power and popularity—in the great debate on repeal before the Dublin Corporation, which then embraced many of the wealthiest and most public-spirited citizens of the capital. This historic encounter really marks the introduction of Butt to the public life of Ireland. The debate revolved around the motion of O'Connell, "that a petition should be presented to the parliament from the corporation of Dublin for the repeal of the union." On the day set for the beginning of the discussion the city assembly house was besieged by an excited throng seeking admittance, but the limited capacity of the building had led to the issuance of tickets and the great majority were compelled to content themselves by lingering about the doors and windows. Within the circular building in which seats had been specially arranged, every available inch of space was occupied. The speech of O'Connell on this occasion was one of the most masterful of his career. He was obsessed with the idea. His forty years of agitation had been a preparation. He was steeped in his subject. He had viewed it from every imaginable angle. During the greater part of a day he let loose his heavy artillery. It required the greatest temerity on the part of any one selected to reply.

And in reply to the uncrowned king, there rose a youth of thirty years. He had only been a member of the bar for five years, and had only severed his connection with Trinity two years before. There was nothing of prestige behind him. And there he stood, facing the expectant crowd which looked upon him with mingled commiseration and amusement, a slen-

der youth above the average height, of well-proportioned figure, and with a plain face that owed its peculiar charm to the perennial smile that played about his lips and beamed in his eye.

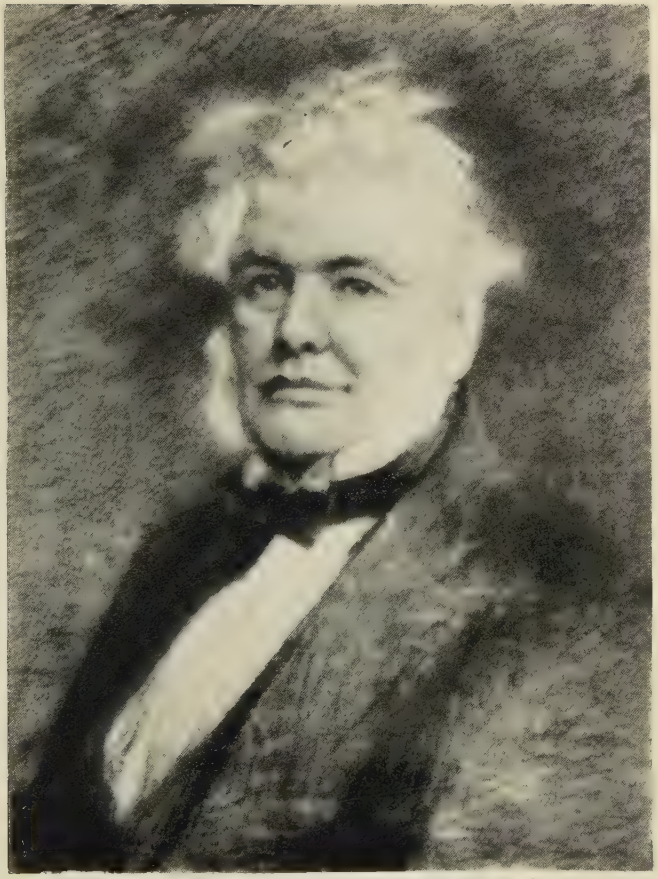
Compared with the masterful argument of O'Connell, the reply of Butt now seems pitifully inadequate, but in the day and generation of the speech there were thousands in Ireland who looked upon it as convincing, and the reputation of the young lawyer broadened immeasurably by the incident. Opposed to the repeal of the union, opposed to a fixed tenure for the tenants, opposed to the abolition of tithes, opposed to manhood suffrage, opposed to vote by ballot, the Isaac Butt of 1843 gave little promise of ever developing into the leader of the popular movement for Irish independence.

II

The following nine years found Butt deep in the practise of his profession, in which he held an exalted position, but not so exclusively concentrated as to prevent him from contributing copiously to the conservative journals on both sides of the channel. A man of scholarly attainments, an entertaining writer, his articles on political topics attracted the attention of the conservative leaders of England who had already marked him for cultivation and observation. He seemed to the typical Englishman of the day a "possible" Irishman. If he entertained the slightest feeling against the conquering nation he carefully concealed his feeling, and all he wrote or spoke could have been uttered with perfect propriety and without offense in the most

exclusive Tory drawing-room of London. It was in these days of prosperity that he fell a victim to the convivial qualities that were to wreck his peace of mind and compromise his leadership when he had attained a more conspicuous position in the world. He did not lack for clients. His legal erudition was not excelled at the Irish bar. No one surpassed him in the art of cross-examination. None surpassed him in court generalship. Few, if any, equaled him in eloquence. No one approached him in his effect upon a jury. Money came easily, and, with the prodigality born of genius, he cast it to the winds. William O'Brien, in his interesting *Recollections,* throws a side light on his life of this period when he would go down to Cork to the Assizes to participate in some great cause, and after thrilling the court with his splendid eloquence and subtlety, would spend the entire night at the card table; and then, after a cold bath, appear in court in the morning, without having closed his eyes, and capable of going through another day with unimpaired powers. It was during this period that he performed his first real service in a patriotic cause when he appeared in the defense of Smith O'Brien and Thomas Francis Meagher when they were tried for conspiracy in '48. It does not appear, however, that his connection with these cases greatly altered his political view-point, though, as we shall see later, the alleged crime and conviction of two such men created within his mind a vague feeling of unrest.

In 1852 he was elected to the imperial parliament as a conservative, and the next thirteen years found him leading a rollicking gay life in the English capital, uncontrolled by any great ambition. This was the begin-



F. B. Yeats, R.H.A. Photograph by Geoghegan

Isaac Butt

ning of his undoing as a man. His parliamentary career, by interfering materially with his practise, ultimately entangled him with innumerable debts which dogged him to the end. It was the day of roysterers and wine bibbers in London, and Butt's geniality, his brilliancy, his tendency to conviviality, his love of company, instantly led him to joining the lively set. It appears that, while he consumed his full share of wine and brandy, he "drank like a gentleman" and was never seen under the influence, but according to T. P. O'Connor, in his *Parnell Movement,* there were unpleasant stories of wild bacchanalian nights, of fights with cab drivers over cab bills, of early morning visits to the police courts.

William O'Brien, in his *Recollections* (page 133), gives a sordid picture of the Butt of those days standing with his back to one of the statues in the Dublin Court, surrounded by a group of admiring lawyers, with a greasy looking discounter hovering on the outskirts of the crowd. The brilliant orator would continue his story undisturbed by the somber outsider, and then he would be seen gliding away, slipping his arm under that of his "creepy creditor," and walking off with him on apparent terms of intimacy and equality. We have it on the authority of O'Connor that he was actually at one time in a debtor's prison. Strange, lovable, vagabondish genius, he might have found more and better company in the old days when Charles James Fox gambled all night at Brooks, when the younger Pitt drank inordinately of port until he could see "two speakers," and when Sheridan divided honors with Fox in the deception of importunate creditors, but the days when public men could play fast

and loose with morals without greatly impairing their public usefulness were gone. That which people laughed at in Fox and Sheridan they frowned upon in Butt. Perhaps William O'Brien has said the kindest thing that can be said of this feature of Butt's character:

"The errors of his young days will always be gently judged in Ireland, for they were largely due to that fondness for good-fellowship and improvident generosity which cause the countrymen of Goldsmith to take a greater pride in the poet's pension to the landlady of his garret in Green Arbor Court in his ragged and starving days than in his monument in Westminster Abbey."

Of his career in parliament between 1852 and 1865 little need be said. He was a consistent follower of the conservatives, and during the last great fight of the protectionists in the days of the corn law agitation his eloquence and familiarity with political economy were considered valuable assets in the losing struggle. His defeat in 1865 was looked upon as a happy event by his real friends who understood something of his improvidence and financial difficulties. It was their hope that he would retire from public life to devote himself to the practise of the profession his genius adorned. It is a striking comment upon his professional standing that upon his return to Dublin he was instantly overwhelmed with briefs. The promise of opulence lay before him. He immediately took rank as the foremost lawyer and forensic orator in Ireland. Had he been content to confine himself henceforth to the courts he would doubtless have taken rank with Curran as one of the most dazzling geniuses of the Irish bar. Indeed a condition similar

to that in which Curran established his position among patriotic Irishmen by his defense of patriots in the courts was already developing. We shall now notice one chapter in the life of Butt which reflects infinite glory upon his career, and entitles him, despite his temperamental weaknesses, and his political failure, to the lasting love and gratitude of the Irish race.

III

There has never been an hour since the volunteers of the eighteenth century compelled the English to concede the legislative independence of the Irish people when there has not been a large element devoted to the idea that Irish rights can only be had at the point of the bayonet. We have seen, in the sketch of Flood, that he looked upon the disbandment of the Volunteers as a national calamity. A little later the more militant remnant of the Volunteers became the nucleus of the United Irishmen who met their fate in the unhappy uprising of 1798. A little later came the "Young Ireland" enthusiasts with revolutionary purposes, and after them the Fenians, who more nearly resembled in their organization and purposes the United Irishmen than any other militant organization the country has known.

The Fenian Brotherhood had its inspiration among the exiled Irishmen of the United States, where it was organized toward the close of 1861. It contemplated the overthrow of English authority in Ireland by force of arms and the establishment of an Irish republic. It had its branch organizations in every state in the union, and very soon a numerous and powerful organ-

ization was perfected in Ireland. There the idea was presented at a time when the soil was peculiarly fecund for the proposition of force. The constitutional movement for repeal was dead. The English attitude toward Irish rights was extremely offensive. Never, perhaps, in two centuries had the the Irish cause been enveloped in such gloom. The only hope was force. And this hope was brightened by the conditions in the United States, which was then engaged in a Civil War in which thousands of Irishmen were distinguishing themselves by their dash and valor. At the head of the fighting Irish Brigade rode General Thomas Francis Meagher—one of the leaders of '48. The failure of previous uprisings had been due in large measure to the lack of proper military preparation. And now the men of Ireland were preparing in the training schools of Gettysburg and the Wilderness.

Thus it was that the Fenian idea took root in Ireland and spread with remarkable celerity and with comparative secrecy. The Fenians were a fighting brood. Night after night, in secluded glens, the members of the brotherhood were drilled in military tactics. One of the songs of the period is expressive of the spirit of the times:

> "Enough of the Voice and the Pen, boys.
> Let us try the Rifle—and then, boys,
> We'll die every man, or
> We'll plant the green banner
> Victorious o'er mountain and glen, boys."

As has always been the case with the revolutionists of Ireland, the leaders of the Fenians were men of character and ability. When the American Nationalists sent an emissary over to Ireland and placed upon

James Stephens, a strong-willed, arrogant and dogmatic man, the burden of organizing the country for the revolution, that remarkable personage called to his aid Thomas Clarke Luby and John O'Leary. Both were men of exceptional capacity. An appreciation on their part of the importance of a newspaper as a medium of communication and agitation led to the establishment of *The Irish People* in 1863, and the militant journal continued in existence, boldly challenging the right of England to rule in Ireland, until the raid upon it and its suppression in the autumn of 1865.

The editorial policy of *The Irish People* was dominated by three masterful men, Luby, O'Leary and Charles Joseph Kickman. The first of these was an able and courageous man of a genial and lovable disposition. John O'Leary was a remarkable personage, possessed of marked literary ability, and it is to him that we owe the fascinating *Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism,* written in the latter days of his eventful life. According to O'Leary the genius of the editorial staff was Charles Joseph Kickman, who wrote brilliantly. In the business office of this organ of Fenianism was that irrepressible and irreconcilable enemy of England whose notable career recently closed amid shadows in this country, O'Donovan Rossa. Among the correspondents of the journal was that other venerable Nemesis of English rule, John Devoy, whose status in Irish history was fixed in the sponsorship of the new departure, and in the organization, along with Davitt and Parnell, of the Land League, and whose virile pen is still active in the editorial columns of *The Gaelic American.* Another contributor whose name was to become a potential one in

Irish history was Fanny Parnell, as it was through her connection with *The Irish People* that the attention of her brother, Charles Stewart Parnell, was first turned toward the wrongs of his race.

After the raid on the office of the official organ of Fenianism had given evidence of a conspiracy and Stephens, Luby, O'Leary, Haltigan,* Rossa and others were arrested on the charge of treason-felony, the Fenians instinctively turned to Isaac Butt to represent them in the courts. This was due to his commanding position at the bar and his persuasive eloquence and not because he had manifested the slightest sympathy with the principles of Fenianism. On the contrary it was generally understood that he was unalterably opposed to any movement outside the constitutional groove. The acceptance of the call from the Fenians, however, was destined to have a very remarkable effect on Irish history. It was to convert the old-time loyalist and conservative into the leader of another national movement looking toward the restoration of the Irish parliament and the solution of the land problem.

The trials of the Fenians were travesties on justice. Almost a century had intervened since Curran had defended the United Irishmen in courts presided over by men who disgraced the ermine, where juries were openly packed, and military display was resorted to in efforts to intimidate, but the intervening century had brought no change in the time-honored methods of

* John Haltigan was the printer of *The Irish People.* His son, James Haltigan, is the author of *The Irish in the American Revolution,* and another son, Patrick J. Haltigan, for many years the editor of the *National Hibernian,* is now the reading clerk of the house of representatives.

conducting Irish state trials. The same outrages were perpetrated in the name of justice.

From the moment he accepted the defense of the Fenian prisoners, Butt threw himself, heart and soul, into the task before him. His intimate association with his clients was a revelation to him. It gave him a new light on Ireland. As the cases progressed, he retired more and more from his general practise, and soon abandoned altogether all business not directly connected with the Fenian trials. His work in the courts commanded universal attention and respect. Confronted by packed juries, by prejudiced judges, by a poisoned public opinion, he fought every inch of the ground with a stubborn tenacity and resourcefulness that had never been surpassed. His eloquence was masterful and inspiring—but it was all in vain. The trials were a farce. Man after man was convicted, and prisoner after prisoner, in speeches from the dock, stirred Ireland from the Irish sea to the Bay of Bantry.

Three days before the trials were to begin James Stephens made his escape from prison under mysterious circumstances,* and Luby was consequently the

* O'Donovan Rossa in *Irish Rebels,* the story of his prison life, in commenting on the mysterious disappearance of Stephens says: "Next morning he (John Devoy, present editor of *The Gælic American*) was brought back and we renewed our acquaintance. Our conversation was all about Ireland and 'the movement.' He was one of the men that took James Stephens out of prison; and it was into his arms he was received when he slipped off the prison wall, and I got a full history of the affair from him. It is strange to find it industriously circulated in America that James Stephens was taken out of prison with the connivance of the English government. . . . James Stephens was taken out of prison by men who were true to Ireland; and, whatever can be said of him in other respects, this, at least, may be said of him, that he is as free from the taint of English gold, and as unlikely to be corrupted by it, as any man who has ever spoken of his name."

first to be placed on trial on the charge of treason-felony. The court room had long been made historic by similar scenes. In the same room Curran had pleaded pitifully for justice for the men of '98. From the dock of the same room Emmet had made his appeal "to time and to eternity and not to men." The same methods of intimidations were resorted to, and in the beginning of his speech in defense of Luby we find Butt, following in the wake of Curran, protesting against the military display.

"Everything," he said, "tends to make us all believe that there is something extraordinary and peculiar in this trial. A great Roman advocate whose name has become a model for advocacy in all countries and all ages once asked, when defending a man in the Forum, 'What means this clash and clang of armed men around me?' Gentlemen, I ask, why is it that in your streets the military are surrounding this tribunal, and the avenues through which the populace were admitted in every former time to witness the trials in this place—why are they now closed by the police? Why is the audience that listens to this trial, why is the public—that great tribunal before which we all discharge our respective duties—composed in its largest proportions of the constabulary?"

So much for the physical conditions surrounding the trials.

In his defense of the prisoners Butt approached his task with the positive knowledge that his clients had been engaged in a conspiracy. He was confronted, of course, by the inevitable informers. Handicapped as he was he took advantage of every technical and constitutional right, only to have them brushed aside by the court. His analysis of the evidence was masterly.

His dissection of the characters and reliability of the informers disclosed them as utterly unworthy of credence. Under ordinary conditions, in ordinary trials, no jury could have been found to convict the accused. But the advocate soon discovered that constitutional guarantees availed nothing. The well established rule proclaimed by Erskine, and agreed to by an English jury, in the case of Hardy was denied him. The charges of judges were bitter harangues for the prosecution. Such flagrant violations of the established rules of justice aroused Butt's indignation, and his protests became more and more vehement. It was here that his drift away from the ultra-conservatism of his youth began, and even in the Luby trial, in denying the treasonable character of an article in *The Irish People,* which had repudiated the proposition that liberty "is not worth a drop of human blood," he boldly exclaimed:

"Gracious Heavens, is not a person to say that in a free country? And do I understand the attorney-general to say that he read with horror the doctrine that no political advantage is worth a drop of blood? I hold and avow that doctrine. And the attorney-general who attacks it is the attorney-general of the ministry who approved of the actions of Garibaldi in Italy, and the attorney-general of the sovereign who owns the throne of this realm, with the proud consciousness that Englishmen did think a political advantage worth a great deal of blood to obtain it; and Russell shed his blood on the scaffold for it; and the men of Derry were the men who shed their blood to obtain the political advantages by which the sovereign obtained the crown.

"I repudiate the doctrine which would tell us to think little of the men who sacrificed their lives to give freedom to the Poles. Which of us would visit Switzerland

and fail to make a pious pilgrimage to the chapel of William Tell? The nation that holds a contrary opinion would be a nation of helots. If the attorney-general had said this in the days of Queen Anne, he would have approved the acts of Doctor Sacheverell. He preached a sermon in which he said no one should resist the supreme power of the king, and he was impeached, and the house of lords found him guilty, and he lost his church preferments—and his book was burned by the common hangman.

"Therefore, gentlemen, do not misunderstand this: The doctrine of the revolution has asserted that when the sovereign fails in his duty to the people, the people have a right to resist; and to enable them to enforce that right, the heads of the revolution enacted that every Englishman had a right to pure freedom. These maxims are not known in this country. The British constitution has not its place in this unhappy land. The government of this country is so carried on that it is necessary for the government to disarm its people; and I must tell you that if every statement of this kind is to be spoken of as high treason in Ireland, the country is not governed in the spirit of the British law. Dismiss that from your mind, as Luby does, that doctrine that a political advantage is not worth a drop of human blood. It is not the doctrine of the British constitution, it is not the doctrine of the British law, and it is not the doctrine that God has imprinted in the minds of men."

With the exception of a few such outbursts of patriotic indignation, Butt confined himself during the first of the Fenian trials to insisting on every constitutional right for his client and to exposing the failure of the evidence to fix the crime of treason-felony upon the defendants. All was in vain. Luby, O'Leary, Haltigan, Moore, Rossa—all passed from the dock to penal servitude. But when, a little later, following the uprising, the courts were packed with Fenians charged

with high treason and with their lives at stake, Butt threw aside restraint and challenged the injustice of the courts with a boldness suggestive of Curran. Henceforth we find him fighting desperately and persistently for every constitutional right of defense, engaging in occasional sharp altercations with the judges, and speaking with an audacity quite foreign to his former methods. His cross-examination of the informers was grilling and prolonged. He no longer confined himself to technical defenses, but, as in his defense of Burke, did not hestitate passionately to defend the character of the Fenians when assailed. Historic justice demands that this defense, made in the presence of authority, and in the face of the attorney-general be preserved:

"After all we have heard charged upon those engaged in the Fenian organization," he said, "after all the hideous stories that were accepted by the cowardly credulity of fear, an outbreak did occur. In many places the gentry were at the mercy of these cruelly slandered Fenians, and we can say with pride for our countrymen that not one single crime of cruelty or outrage disgraced their movement. You have heard this proved abundantly in the evidence of this case. Even the police who fell into their hands were treated with kindness. They spared them and let them go, when they knew that in doing so they were leaving the witnesses whose testimony might bring them to the scaffold. For hours together these witnesses were in their power. They voluntarily let them go unharmed when they might forever have silenced the voice of the accuser; and if any one ever suffers for being of the party at Stepaside and Glencullen, he must be convicted on the testimony of witnesses who, as they appear one after another against him, are living and breathing witnesses of the mercy and humanity of the

insurgents. Had they been actuated by bloodthirstiness or cruelty these witnesses would never have been here to tell the tale."

In his defense of John M'Cafferty, an American citizen, Butt made an especially brilliant fight, placing the court on record as refusing the prisoner's rights guaranteed by the spirit of the British law.

As the injustice of the trials grew more flagrant, Butt became more and more audacious in his denunciation of the government until in the trial of Flood, Duffy and Cody he reached a climax in a bitter denunciation of the court. In this case the unfairness of the proceeding was peculiarly irritating and infamous. The three men, tried together, were charged with separate offenses, and Cody was charged with being a party to a conspiracy to assassinate the presiding judges and the members of a jury in a previous trial, four of whom sat on his own case. That this was done with the deliberate intent to blacken the prospects for the acquittal of Flood and Duffy was all too evident. The impassioned protests of Butt were unheeded. In the course of his argument to the jury the intrepid advocate created something of a sensation by the audacity of his attack upon the proceeding when he said:

"I ask you, then, was there ever in the annals of a British tribunal—in the history of the regular tribunals of any country upon earth—such a spectacle as is now presented in this court in the drama now going on, into which you and the judges have been reluctantly dragged as actors? The prisoner, Cody, is on trial for conspiracy to shoot three judges. These three judges are sitting in judgment upon him on that charge. He is on trial

for conspiracy to shoot twelve other persons who are named—to shoot them because, attending here on the panel, they have given a verdict in another case. Four of these persons are sitting as jurors to try whether he is guilty of that charge. The statement of these facts is sufficient to brand this trial as an outrage upon every principle of justice."

And in the course of the same speech Butt did not hesitate to accuse the government with manufacturing a false charge of conspiracy to assassinate for the purpose of preventing the queen from extending mercy to men already convicted and sentenced to die the frightful death of the scaffold. Owing to the attempt that has been made to blacken the character of the Fenians who have played such an important part in the Irish movement, everything urged in their behalf in the presence of the representatives of the government is important in establishing their historic status. On the assassination charge Butt said:

"I ask you as Irish gentlemen, as men of Irish truth and Irish justice, entirely to discredit this damnable fabrication of the assassination plot. I am anxious for the prisoners. I am anxious for those, not now on their trial, against whom, when they were on their trial, no such evidence was produced, no such charge was made. I am anxious for the honor of our country. Wild and, if you will, wicked men may have used language that implied that they were ready to administer the wild justice of revenge. Wild and desperate men may have done desperate things to avenge themselves on individual informers. These are the incidents of every conflict in which strong passions are engaged. But on behalf of those who have been guiding the Fenian organization; on behalf of those who are now wearing out their lives in the miseries of a convict prison; on behalf of those

who are awaiting the execution of the doom that has sentenced them to die; on behalf of all Irishmen who have joined in this wild effort for their native land, whether they lie in the prison cell or are still free on their native hills, or exiles in far-off lands, I indignantly deny that ever any design of assassination entered into their plans. It is a cruel slander upon men whose whole life and conduct, whatever were their political follies or their political crimes, prove them incapable of this.

"Do not wonder at my earnestness. Even in the presence of those to whom my first duty is now due, I can not forget that in this evidence a blow is struck at those who are not here. The life of a noble-hearted man may be at this moment trembling in the balance. We know—I state nothing that has not been the subject of public discussion—we know the mercy that has touched the royal breast; we know how considerations of state policy have been urged against it; how against those considerations the instincts of woman's heart have pleaded in a queenly bosom. We know the efforts in which the voice of humanity has spoken to the throne the desires of loyal men that the life of the true-hearted might be spared. And now, when that life is trembling in the balance, the fabrication of that vile traitor is brought forward here to turn the scale. And those who cry for blood believe that if the fabrication which represents assassination as a portion of the Fenian plan can gain one moment's credence, evil passions would be stirred, in whose presence mercy and justice might plead in vain. And knowing all this, feeling all this, thinking that he could do service if he could give reason for taking away of human life, that wretched man has crept from his loathsome lair, a lair more loathsome than the stew from which he came a second time to swear away the life of Burke, and by this new fabrication earn another claim upon the gratitude of those who are thirsting for blood."

It was also in the course of his defense of Flood that Butt made the bitter charge that the British em-

pire apparently had one law for England and another one for Ireland. The charge upon which Flood was tried was that he had entered into a conspiracy for the seizure of Chester Castle in England—but he was being tried in Dublin. In several of his speeches during the Fenian trials he had harped upon the ruling of the English courts in the Hardy case that no man could be convicted of high treason on the testimony of one witness—a ruling utterly ignored in the Fenian trials. Time and again he had quoted Lord Russell to the effect that Irish juries were more pliable to the purposes of the government than English juries. And in the Flood case he picked upon the same chord in commenting upon the fact that not one prosecution had been initiated in England in connection with the affair at Chester.

"And, gentlemen," he said, "when we come to consider this marvelous story of the project for the seizure of Chester Castle, it is impossible not to be struck by the singular fact that not one single human being has been prosecuted in England for a participation in that treasonable design. In the center of one of the most peaceful and prosperous districts of peaceful and loyal England, hundreds of persons assembled in that quaint old city of Chester to raise the standard of open rebellion, to make war upon the queen's troops, to seize upon one of the strongholds of the nation in the open day. They came in troops from every quarter; they filled the streets of the town; and disappeared as mysteriously as they came. And of all the crowd that met them in the broad daylight—if you are to believe the story—in an act of open and audacious rebellion, not one has been prosecuted or brought to account. Not an effort appears to have been made to find out even who they were. No reward is offered for the apprehension of any of them.

They left their homes, wherever they live, quietly in the morning. They went back to them as quietly in the evening. No one can tell us who they were, whence they came or whither they went. The tranquillity of the old city was not disturbed for one single hour. No magisterial investigation has ever been instituted. No police inquiry was held. A rebellion passed off as a matter of course—and at this hour no single individual has been made amenable to justice for being in Chester with that party of traitors on that day.

"Two persons have been put upon their trials for participation in that treasonable raid—and their trials take place in Dublin. If the case be true, why was not Flood tried in Chester? There is but one reason that can be assigned. They dare not submit to an English jury the evidence on which they ask you to convict. Lord Russell has said, and truly said, that 'while in all state trials English juries lean to the side of liberty, Irish juries lean to the side of arbitrary power and the crown.' Were they afraid of an English jury? Why was not this man tried in Chester? Are you empaneled on that jury to verify the reproach of Lord Russell, and give one more proof that when men are accused by power, Irish juries can always be found ready to convict them on evidence on which English juries would refuse to act?"

But such appeals were futile. The real secret of the pliability of Irish juries in state trials has always been that power has selected the juries in such cases with the view to conviction regardless of evidence, and such was the case in the Fenian trials. The accused Fenians one after another were passed through a form of trial and promptly convicted. Many were sentenced to penal servitude for many years. Some, accused of high treason, were sentenced to die upon the scaffold, to be hung by the neck until dead, to "have their heads severed from their bodies, and their bodies cut into

four parts." It was the old familiar formula for Irish patriots. Through the interference of the queen those sentenced to die were spared for penal servitude. The Fenian movement was apparently destroyed. There came, a little later on, another episode at Manchester resulting in the making of a few more martyrs, Allen, Larkin and O'Brien, whose memories are held in reverance by Irishmen throughout the world. But Fenianism was history.

The shameless travesty of the Fenian trials, and the nobility of the character of the Fenian prisoners, awakened Isaac Butt to a new career—a career foreshadowed in the following lines from his peroration in defense of Flood:

"Deeper far than Fenianism, deeper than any external manifestation, lies the disaffection of the people to the whole system by which they are ruled. Rebellion may be put down by force. Flying columns may rout and scatter the bands of undisciplined revolt. But still the disaffection lurks in the secret hearts of the people. By the peasant's fireside, round the hearth of the cottage, hatred—I grieve in my soul to use the word, but it is a true one—hatred of the whole system of Irish government rankles in every breast."

And thus from the Dublin court room in which Emmet made his immortal appeal, in which Curran had poured forth his splendid eloquence, Isaac Butt went forth to dedicate his genius henceforth to the undivided service of his country.

IV

The government, however, was not satisfied with a mere conviction. Some of these unhappy prisoners

were almost goaded into insanity. Prodded to fury by one of the wardens, O'Donovan Rossa was betrayed into making an attack upon the miserable persecutor and for thirty-five days he paid the penalty of asserting his manhood by having his hands handcuffed behind his back.

However, the government was not alone in its determination to follow the Fenians into the prisons, for Isaac Butt had become so ardently attached to the cause of his clients that he determined to make their cause a national cause. With this in view he organized and became president of the Amnesty Association, perfected for the purpose of obtaining their release. He determined that Ireland should make their cause her own, and that England and the world should know something of the ineffable brutality to which they were being subjected.

His first step was to petition Gladstone. He might as well have petitioned Mars. Only a little while before Gladstone had given expression to a bitter and eloquent protest against the treatment of some Italian prisoners incarcerated in an Italian prison—but these were Irishmen, British subjects, incarcerated in a British prison. He turned a deaf ear. Then Butt determined that Gladstone should hear. He made his appeal direct to Ireland. A series of monster meetings was held all over the island and the people poured forth as they had not done since the days of O'Connell. The masterful eloquence of Butt had aroused them as they had not been stirred since the god-like Dan had thundered from the repeal platform. The records show that during the year 1869 more than a million men appeared at the Amnesty meetings to register a passionate pro-

test with the government. In August the Amnesty orators addressed seventeen thousand at Limerick, ten thousand at Waterford, thirty thousand at Drogheda; in September they spoke to twenty thousand at Bray, thirty thousand at Kilkenny and Kilfinane, thirty thousand at Dundalk, twenty thousand at Longford, fifty thousand at Castlebar, seventy thousand at Inchicore, forty thousand at Cork, and thirty thousand at Clonard; and in October they appeared before forty thousand at Templemore, twenty thousand at Ennis, twenty thousand at Roscommon, fifty thousand at Enniscorthy, twenty thousand at Navan, fifty thousand at Tipperary, and Butt capped the climax in a startling meeting in the fields of Cabra, Dublin, where he swayed more than two hundred thousand men with an eloquence that appealed to those who heard it as inspired.

The meeting in the fields of Cabra smacked of revolution. Butt had given a sufficient manifestation of the fact that the Irish people were not unmindful that the Fenian prisoners were persecuted because of their loyalty to Ireland. He now felt that the time was ripe for a cessation of these gatherings, and immediately after the Cabra meeting, he offered a resolution before the Amnesty Association to the effect that no more meetings should be held for the time being in view of the overwhelming evidence that had been given the government of the popular sentiment in Ireland.

But Butt was not to rest his case with the Cabra meeting. Once more he turned to Gladstone in a letter of great length and tremendous force, reviewing the case in detail, and linking the treatment of the Fenian prisoners with the whole of Ireland. It is in

this masterful letter that we have our first introduction to the new Butt—conservative no longer, English sympathizer no longer, but now an aggressive Irish patriot, in complete accord with Irish sentiment. The following passage is not only an eloquent defense of the prisoners, but throws a light of historic value upon the character of the Fenians:

"Much of that change, I have said, was due to the personal demeanor of the men. Let me dwell for a moment on a matter that, in truth, vitally affects the question of their right to a pardon—I mean the personal character of the prisoners, and the motives and objects with which they entered on the enterprise in which they were engaged. Whatever obloquy gathered round them at first, there are few men who now deny to the leaders of the Fenian conspiracy the merit of perfect sincerity, of a deep and honest conviction of the righteousness of their cause, and of an unselfish and disinterested devotion to that cause. I was placed toward most of them in a relation which gave me an opportunity of observing them in circumstances which try men's souls. Both I and those who were associated with me in that relation have often been struck by their high-minded truthfulness, that shrunk with sensitiveness from subterfuges which few men in their position would have thought wrong. No mean or selfish instructions ever reached us. Many, very many messages were conveyed to us which were marked by a punctilious and an almost overstrained anxiety to avoid even a semblance of departure from the strictest line of honor. There was not one of them who would have purchased his safety by a falsehood, by a concession that would have brought dishonor to his cause, or by a disclosure that would have compromised the safety of a companion. It seems like an exaggeration to say this; but this is a matter on which I can write as a witness, and therefore am bound by the responsibility of one.

"I know that my testimony would be confirmed by all

Courtesy Mrs. Rossa

O'Donovan Rossa

Taken just before his last illness

who had the same means of observing them as myself. The conviction was forced upon us all that, whatever the men were, they were no vulgar revolutionists, disturbing their country for any base or selfish purpose; they were enthusiasts of great hearts and lofty minds; and, with the bold and unwavering courage with which, one and all, they met the doom which the law pronounced against their crime, there was a startling proof that their cause and their principles had power to inspire in them the faith and the endurance which elevated suffering into martyrdom.

"These, I confess, are the memories that have haunted me, and which have stirred my heart, when I thought that men like these were sent to herd with the vilest and the meanest criminals, and subjected to indignities which we can scarcely bear to see inflicted on the most vile. If I am right in the description I have given of them, there is a moral unfitness in the degradation they are enduring. I know well that law must vindicate its power—I know well that no government can treat rebellion as a venal offense. But there are instincts in our nature which teach us, above all the selfish sophistries that appeal to our cowardice and our passions, that to inflict the lifelong punishment of the convict prison upon high-minded and truthful and self-sacrificing enthusiasts is morally wrong. It is from this that I take my start. The administration of criminal justice which places such men on a level with the offscourings of mankind offends against feelings which can not be violated without crime.

". . . Our queen has these men in her power. The law has given her the absolute right to punish them as they are punished. But the law has also entrusted her with the noble prerogative of pardon; and her oath, embodying a duty which God has cast on her when he placed the scepter in her hands, binds her to administer justice with mercy. You are her chief adviser in the discharge of obligations from which neither you nor she can escape. I ask you solemnly—I ask you by the highest obligation that can bind you to take up and study the case

of any one of the prisoners you are detaining. Be satisfied—as I know you will and must be satisfied—that, no matter how much you may condemn him, he acted under a sincere and honest conviction of duty to his country in an honest and elevated effort to redress his country's wrongs; that no selfish scheme of aggrandizement darkened the purity of his motives; that no desire of bloodshed or violence mingled with his hopes for his country's deliverance. Read over, then, the accounts of the miseries and the degradations which he endures; and when next you enter the closet of your sovereign, and advise her as your conscience tells you as to the duty which she owes to that convict over whom God has given her power—will you, can you say that it is to leave him in that misery and that degradation? I am descending to somewhat lower grounds when I remind you of that to which I have already referred—the absence of all outrage or violence which marked the outbreak of March, 1867. It can not be said that there was not opportunity. I was present at more than one trial at which it was undeniably proved that the homes of loyal, actively loyal gentlemen, were in absolute control of armed parties of insurgents. The ladies of the family, in some instances unprotected and alone, had not to complain of one rude word addressed to one of them."

Having shown in various ways that the whole Irish nation was demanding amnesty for the Fenian prisoners, he argued that a refusal on the part of the government would be proof positive to the Irish people that they were not looked upon as the equals in rights of the English in the so-called co-partnership of the two nations:

"Some years ago there was an unsuccessful revolt in England. There had been in that country prosecutions for high treason. Suppose the men convicted of that offense to be enduring penal servitude. Suppose the

whole English nation, with one consent, to ask for their liberation—all the municipalities of England to send their chief magistrates to the levee of her majesty, to place in her hands the petitions which these municipalities had desired them to present—the Lord Mayor of London to exercise his ancient prerogative of addressing the queen upon her throne, and to proceed from the audience of his sovereign to the bar of the house of commons, and there to present the petitions of the chief municipality in the kingdom. Suppose mighty mass meetings to assemble myriads in every district and city and town. Suppose three hundred thousand men to meet peacefully and quietly on Hampstead Heath, or even to seize, in spite of the police, upon one of the royal parks. Suppose all this countenanced by a large portion of the magistracy of the country. And lastly suppose the demand for a pardon to be supported earnestly and solemnly by the clergy of the church of the English people. How many days—how many hours would elapse before the prison doors were thrown open? How many days would power be retained by the minister—I might almost say by the sovereign—if they were not?

"While the prisoners are detained in penal servitude against the will of the Irish people, that detention will be to Ireland a living badge of conquest—not the less galling because you will not trust them to any place of keeping on Irish soil. Every mark of national servitude attends the imprisonment of those whom the Irish people desire to let go.

"I know that while they are kept in custody the discussion will go on. It will assume a form and a character different from any that have hitherto belonged to it. There are bold and feeling hearts in Ireland that will never let this matter rest. I could tell you of a thousand forms in which the popular resentment may disturb and embitter all the relations of government and of political life. Like Banquo's ghost, it will present itself at every public feast. It will raise its angry form at every hustling where the supporter of the government appears. It

will meet our rulers in their walks and drives through our streets. The narrative of the sorrows of the prisoners will be repeated, in prose and song, in the far-off lands in which the Irish race is scattered. It may be that throughout Europe, in the dismal tales of the severities of Dartmoor, the story of Silvio Pellico and Speilberg will be revived."

There is reason to believe that the powerful appeal of Isaac Butt, for whom Gladstone entertained a high personal regard, made a deep impression upon the prime minister, but the government was adamant. Then, after the mass meetings, came more convincing and startling proof that Ireland was aroused. A vacancy occurred in the parliamentary representation of Tipperary, and it was decided to put up O'Donovan Rossa, the splendid patriot who recently died in New York and was imposingly buried in Dublin, and who was still in penal servitude. A popular government candidate was put up against him—a man of fine qualities who had been one of the Fenians' legal battery in the trials. The people were not opposed to the lawyer —they were for Rossa for a purpose. In those days it required money to conduct a campaign in Tipperary. There was no fund, but the people responded with such marked generosity that a fund of sufficient proportions was almost immediately raised. Rossa was easily elected—and the news carried to Gladstone.*

* John Mitchell, commenting at the time on the election of Rossa, said: "A great event has befallen in Irish history. Tipperary has just done a wiser and a bolder deed than her sister county of Clare achieved forty years ago. That Clare election won, to be sure, what was called Catholic Emancipation, for the Claremen elected the disqualified Catholic, O'Connell, to represent them in parliament. Now the Tipperarymen have elected the disqualified felon, O'Donovan Rossa, in his convict cell—have

While the result was not immediate an impression had been made upon the government, and Butt persisted in his agitation until success finally crowned his efforts.

But the Amnesty movement and the Fenian trials did something more than reawaken Ireland—it made a leader. It smoothed the way for the revival of the constitutional agitation for home rule. It altered the view of Isaac Butt. The effect upon him, as he has described it, was expressed in his speech to the National Conference of 1873:

"Mr. Gladstone said that Fenianism taught him the intensity of Irish disaffection. It taught me more and better things. It taught me the depth, the breadth, the sincerity of that love of fatherland that misgovernment had tortured into disaffection. And misgovernment, driving men to despair, had exaggerated into revolt. State trials were not new to me. Twenty years before I stood near Smith O'Brien when he braved the sentence of death which the law pronounced upon him. I saw Meagher meet the same and then I asked myself this, 'Surely the state is out of joint, surely all our social system is unhinged when O'Brien and Meagher are condemned by their country to a traitor's doom.' Twenty years have passed away, and once more I stood by men who had dared the desperate enterprise of freeing their country by revolt. They were men who were run down by obloquy—they had been branded as the enemies of religion and social order. I saw them manfully bear up against all. I saw the unflinching firmness to their cause by which they testified the sincerity of their faith in that cause—the deep conviction of its righteousness and truth —I saw them meet their fate with a manly fanaticism

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elected among all those imprisoned comrades the very one whom England most specially abhors—because he defied and denounced the most loudly her government, her traitor judges and her packed juries—elected him as the most fit and proper person to represent them."

that made them martyrs. I heard their words of devotion to their country, as with firm step and unyielding heart they left the dock and went down the dark passage that led them to the place where all hope closed upon them. And I asked myself again, 'Is there no way to arrest this? Are our best and bravest spirits to be carried away under this system of constantly resisted oppression and constantly defeated revolt?' "

Thus the Fenians converted Isaac Butt, the quiet conservative, into one of the most valuable of Irish patriots. Henceforth we shall find him giving up all, profession, opulence and ease, to devote the remaining years of his life to the cause of his oppressed country, fighting fearlessly and constantly, albeit perhaps not successfully, but until he had presented the cause of Ireland to the imperial parliament so effectively that for the first time in many years, the rights of Ireland were once more the topic of the London clubs, drawing-rooms, and English country houses. His amnesty movement had awakened Ireland. We shall now see him shaking John Bull out of his complacent sleep.

V

The excitement incidental to the amnesty movement soon swept Butt away from his professional moorings and into the maelstrom of parliamentary life again. It was quite a different man, however, who reentered Westminster from the unambitious soul who had left it in 1865. With Butt the ordinary conditions of life were reversed. Instead of being consumed in youth with an overweening ambition which gradually simmered down into a conservative old age, he gave evidence of no high aspirations in youth, and in old

age he undertook the ambitious project of restoring the violated rights of his countrymen. The Fenian movement had satisfied him of two things—the determination of his people never to acquiesce in their humiliation and subjection, and their inability successfully to cope in any revolutionary uprising with the trained and thoroughly equipped battalions of the British army. This realization turned his thoughts in the direction of another constitutional agitation looking to the restoration of the Irish parliament. No one, perhaps, but the valiant defender of the Fenian prisoners could have so much as interested the Irish people in another peaceful plan for the righting of their wrongs. The Fenians had every reason to love Isaac Butt and to concede something of their own convictions to him. The amnesty movement gave him an opportunity to blend the moderate and the radical elements into one common movement. The disestablishment of the church in Ireland had aroused the ire of that portion of the gentry which had hitherto declined to participate in any national movement, and they now took their revenge by insisting that the government might as well go on and disconnect the two countries. When the first meeting was held at which the Home-Rule movement was born there were numerous conservatives present participating actively and with apparent sincerity in the work of organization. Among the more prominent of these were the conservative lord mayor of Dublin, and Major Knox, the conservative proprietor of *The Irish Times*. We shall find these conservatives dropping out as they found their resentment over the church disestablishment cooling, but the new national leader anticipated nothing of the kind. Thor-

oughly satisfied that the conservatives would stick, Butt made his appeal to the revolutionary or Fenian element. William O'Brien, in his *Recollections,* tells of a banquet in Hood's Hotel, in Great Brunswick Street, Dublin, which he attended in the interest of the *Cork Herald,* and which was addressed by Butt. The leader had been engaged throughout the day and the early part of the evening in defending in the courts a man who had fired upon a Galway landlord, and after a splendid fight, had succeeded in freeing him. He appeared at the banquet flushed with his victory and in fine fettle. The majority of the men gathered about the board were Fenians and their friends, and to these Butt turned in a speech which is described as brilliantly eloquent with an earnest plea that they give him a chance to demonstrate what could be accomplished by a constitutional agitation. Now argumentative and now persuasive, pathetic and passionate, "fairly burning with the divine fire of eloquence," he declared that if the Fenians would support him in a constitutional movement until its utter futility had been proved, he would then give way to the revolutionary element and offer his own life to the service. It was a remarkable utterance, and throws a new light on Butt's political character.

On learning that O'Brien had taken copious notes with the view to printing the speech in the *Cork Herald,* Butt importuned him to destroy the notes, and this was done. Some inklings of the nature of the speech, however, reached the house of commons, where attention was called to it, but, in the absence of any publication, the matter was dropped. It was through this attitude toward the Fenians, however, in connec-

tion with the conservative dissatisfaction over the church disestablishment, that made possible the organization of the movement which Butt was to pass on to Parnell. The movement was organized at the Bilton Hotel, Dublin, May nineteenth, 1870, when Butt made the principal speech, and resolutions, declaratory of the purposes of the organization, were adopted to the effect that "it is the opinion of this meeting that the true remedy for the evils of Ireland is the establishment of an Irish parliament with full control over our domestic affairs."

Little need be said of the activities of the new organization previous to 1874 when Gladstone unexpectedly dissolved parliament and thereby gave Butt his opportunity for gathering around him a nationalist party. There is something ineffably pathetic in the situation that confronted the Irish leader. He knew that the people of Ireland were with him, and was convinced that with a militant Home-Rule candidate in each constituency in Ireland he could sweep the country. The difficulties in the way were of a financial nature. The movement was without sufficient funds. In those days elections were extremely expensive and there were but a few hundred pounds in the Home-Rule fund. The Irish-Americans had not been enlisted at this time in the work. Not only was the party without funds, but, at this time of all times, Butt's personal creditors became embarrassingly importunate. There is something infinitely pathetic, not to say tragic, in the picture given us in O'Brien's *Recollections* of Butt's appearance at Limerick, where he was the Home-Rule candidate, only to find that a bankruptcy messenger had been despatched to Limerick from London to

arrest him for debt. A great crowd had assembled at the theater, the announcement was made that the Irish leader was "unavoidably absent," and Butt hastened away to Killaloe, eighteen miles distant, to escape his pursuer. There is something immensely amusing in the situation which developed in that village where Butt hoped to escape notice. The word spread rapidly that the popular leader was in the village, and within a startlingly short time the band was out in the streets and a torch-light procession marched to the hotel to present him with an address. There poor Butt was compelled to sit, nervously twirling his glasses, listening to the reading of an interminable address, and fearing every moment the advent of the messenger from London. Indeed he just had time to stammer a few words of gratitude and appreciation and to escape through the back yard of the hotel when the officer reached the scene only to find that the bird had flown.

Under such disheartening circumstances Butt did the best he could. Wherever he could find a genuine Home Ruler who was able to defray his own election expenses he eagerly pounced upon him and dragged him into the arena. It was at this time that he found the opportunity to enlist in the service of the country several splendid men such as A. M. Sullivan, Richard Power, and the stern irrepressible Biggar, who was later to be such a thorn in his side. Along with these, however, he was compelled to accept the candidacies of many who were mere policy men, discredited Whigs, political opportunists, soldiers of fortune, old men who had been political failures, young men eager to sell themselves to England. Out of the one hundred three Irish members he succeeded in surrounding himself

with a Home-Rule party of sixty—but such a party! William O'Brien has aptly characterized it as "an incongruous and barbarous mosaic." And yet it was this party, incongruous as it was, which made it possible for Parnell a few years later to build up a militant organization.

And now a word as to Butt's idea of Home Rule. It was not precisely the same idea which was accepted later on by Charles Stewart Parnell. It is but fair to Butt to describe his conception as much as possible after the fashion of one of his followers. Among the brilliant characters who shared Butt's views to a large extent was the satirical, sarcastic and eloquent F. H. O'Donnell, who has recently given to the world his fascinating and rather startling *History of the Irish Parliamentary Party*. It is difficult for any American to read Mr. O'Donnell with patience. He makes no effort to conceal his profound contempt for Parnell. He evidently despises Americans of Irish extraction. The contribution of American money to the campaign coffers of the Home-Rule party he looks upon as degrading to the Irish. Indeed one is compelled, while paying tribute to O'Donnell's genius, to conclude that he writes with the splenic fury of a disappointed politician who feels that he was set aside by men of inferior mentality. However, he looked upon the Butt movement as a statesmanlike movement and upon Butt himself as a dignified high-thinking statesman.

We can do no better perhaps in describing Butt's proposed federal system than to quote from O'Donnell's work.

"In precise English and with a wealth of illustration," he says (page 48), "Butt and his friends in the Home

Rule League maintained the necessity of national liberties for a common empire. In a federal arrangement which would recognize the full self-government of Ireland in all Irish matters, according to the ancient Irish constitution of king, lords and commons—no Gladstonian single-chambers and sub-colonial assemblies for him—there lay, according to Mr. Butt, all the national guaranties required by Ireland; and in the maintenance of an imperial parliament for imperial and British affairs there lay all the imperial guaranties required by the united kingdoms of Ireland and Great Britain. So far as imperial affairs were concerned, Mr. Butt insisted upon the complete and undiminished participation of the Irish representation in the rights and duties of the common empire."

Again of this plan Mr. O'Donnell says (page 49):

"No British statesman, neither Chamberlain nor Roseberry nor another, can ever enunciate principles of empire which can substantially change for the better the scheme of national and imperial federation which Isaac Butt laid before the assembly of Ireland and Irish opinion forty years ago."

The arguments advanced by Butt in advocacy of the federal idea were threefold: first, it was necessary to the end that Ireland should have a part in the vast colonial system of the empire which had been built up to a considerable degree by Irish valor and ingenuity; second, that without such a system the Irish people would be hopelessly separated from the millions of Irish living in England and the British colonies; and third, that without it it would be impossible for the Irish in the fatherland ever to be of service to the Irish in England.

On another point Butt was adamant where Parnell was willing to yield—he insisted upon two chambers in the restored Irish parliament, and that the Irish should retain a representation in the imperial parliament. It is the contention of O'Donnell that this latter phase was responsible for the support given the Home-Rule movement by the Irish in England. It will be noted by any student of Butt's life that he differed temperamentally from Parnell in that he was essentially conservative while Parnell was essentially a radical. It is quite certain that Butt would never have countenanced the land movement of Davitt. He drew in horror from anything that smacked of revolution. He had the old conservative idea of the sanctity of property. O'Donnell has probably given an accurate idea of Butt's mental processes in the following passage:

"It was perfectly clear to us that we wanted to restore the Irish constitution; that no single chamber could possibly be a parliament of Grattan, nor could possibly be any guarantee to the interest of property and conservatism; that on the other hand the existence of the house of lords, possessed of all the rights of the English chamber, was the best possible security against spoliatory legislation. It might occasionally be a clog upon some real reforms. But better a conservative clog than a socialist menace and a Jacobin convention."

The movement of Butt also differed from that of Parnell in that the former proposed to keep the Home-Rule party absolutely free and independent of any outside power or influence such as the Fenians, the Land League, and the American affiliation. Thus we find, that the very features of Butt's policy, which

O'Donnell praises as statesmanlike and superior to the Parnell plan, are the very features that have made it possible for the Home-Rule party in parliament to force concessions from the British parliament.

Now let us turn to his parliamentary activity. We find Butt taking advantage of the earliest opportunity in the parliament of 1874 for bringing forward his Home-Rule propaganda in a speech which has never been surpassed probably in its brilliancy or exhaustive treatment of the subject from every possible point of view. This speech made a deep impression upon the house of commons, but it made a more abiding impression upon the masses of the English people, and especially upon the working classes of the industrial centers of England. O'Donnell tells us that in traveling about over England a little later he was astonished to find the number of English artisans of the higher order who had preserved Butt's speech and had mastered and acquiesced in its reasoning.

It was the plan of Butt to crystallize the proposals of his party in a number of bills to be brought before the house and exhaustively discussed. It is recorded that the leader took upon himself to a large degree the preparation of these measures. Year after year he pursued this policy. At first the English were amazed at the effrontery of Butt in daring to demand any of the time of the British parliament for the discussion of Irish affairs, but, as they followed his methods, and found that he proposed a moderate, conventional discussion, and that his manner of discussion was "gentlemanly" and in "good tone," they ultimately became reconciled to the Home-Rule program, and after listening with comparative patience to the speeches, they

proceeded to vote down the Irish measures with good-natured unanimity. The English parties were agreed upon one proposition—that Home Rule was a pleasant diversion and nothing more. The English press of those days loved to poke gentle fun at Butt for his audacity in submitting a Home-Rule plan. The *Daily Telegraph* suggested that of course Mr. Butt had no idea that the English people would receive his proposals seriously. And in the meanwhile conditions were growing rapidly worse in Ireland.

It is an interesting sidelight on Butt's leadership that he took an especial interest in the land question. He directed the attention to the necessity of land reform before the days of Davitt. It became an obsession with him. His greatest interest was taken in his land bills. Ultimately his plans were vindicated, but not until the gentle leader was sleeping in a graveyard in Donegal. During this period he wrote many illuminating pamphlets on the rights of the tenants. After the passage of the Land Act of 1870, which English statesmen, woefully ignorant of Irish conditions, honestly thought was a complete solution of the problem, Butt wrote an exhaustive book on the act, which demonstrated the utter worthlessness of the measure. The English press joked the author upon the absurdity of his conclusions and insisted that the tenants in Ireland were not only highly prosperous, but entirely satisfied. Such was the insolent attitude of the conqueror toward the sufferings of the conquered.

In his work on *The Irish People and the Irish Land* Butt has given a touching picture of the conditions in Ireland which directed his great heart toward the land question:

"Let me say once for all how I came to write. Two years ago I had formed views of the land question, as, I suppose, most persons in my position have. I was satisfied of that which lies on the very surface—that insecurity of tenure is a great evil. I was convinced that compensation for tenants' improvements was just and right; but when I saw the people flying in masses from their homes I felt that really to understand the question we must go deeper than all this—that there must be some mischief deeply rooted in our social system, which, in a country blessed with the advantages like ours, produced results so strangely contrary to everything which the laws which regulate the history of nations or the conduct of classes or individuals might lead us to expect.

"An accident turned my thoughts more intensely in this direction. Traveling on the Southern railroad, I witnessed one of those scenes too common in our country, but which, I believe, no familiarity can make any person of feeling witness without emotion. The station was crowded with emigrants and their friends who came to see them off. There was nothing unusual in the occurrence—nothing that is not often to be seen. Old men walked slowly, and almost hesitatingly, to the carriages that were to take them away from the country to which they were never to return. Railway porters placed in the train strange boxes and chests of every shape and size, sometimes even small articles of furniture, which told that their owners were taking with them their little all. In the midst of them a brother and a sister bade each other their last farewell—the mother pressed passionately to her breast the son whom she shall never see again. Women carried or led to their places in the carriages little children, who looked around as if they knew not what all this meant, but wept because they saw their mothers weeping. Strong men turned aside to brush aside the not unmanly tear. As the train began to move there was the uncontrollable rush of relatives crowding down to give the last handshakes. The railway servants pushed them back—we moved on more rapidly—and then rose from the groups we left behind a strange mingled cry

of wild farewells, and prayers, and blessings, and that melancholy wail of Irish sorrow which no one who has ever heard will ever forget—and we rushed on with our freight of sorrowing and reluctant exiles across a plain of fertility unsurpassed perhaps in any European soil. It was a light matter, but there was something in that picture—close to us rose the picturesque ruins which seemed to tell us from the past that there were days when an Irish race had lived, and not lived in poverty, upon that very plain.

"These were scenes which surely no Irishman could see without emotion. The transient feeling they may excite is but of little use except as it may be suggestive of thought. It was impossible not to ask why were these people thus flying from their homes, deserting that rich soil. I could not but feel that no satisfactory solution of the question had yet been given. I asked myself if it were not a reproach to those among us whom God had raised a little above the people by the advantages of intellect and education if we gave no real earnest thought to such an inquiry; and I formed a purpose—I almost made to myself a vow—that I would employ as far as I could whatever little power I had acquired in investigating facts in endeavoring to trace the strange mystery to its origin."

In pursuance of this vow, Butt, in session after session, pressed the land question upon the imperial parliament, only to be laughed at for his pains. It was during the session of 1876 that he made his most stubborn fight, and delivered his most forceful speeches.

The utter refusal of the English seriously to consider Irish affairs impressed upon Butt the necessity of some form of obstruction before Parnell and Biggar had commenced their obstructive tactics with which the public associates their names as the originators. During the session of 1875, Butt resorted to a mild

form of obstruction, mild in the light of the Parnell tactics, and still provocative enough to lead the *Annual Register* of that year to complain that "there was much obstruction of legislation because of the debates on the Irish coercion bill." And yet nothing was accomplished. The Irish bills were presented, spoken upon, defeated—session after session. The "barbarous mosaic" of a party caused the leader endless worry. The people in Ireland began to despair of constitutional methods. As early as 1865, Butt had declared at a dinner at Canon Rice's at Queenstown, that Ireland would have home rule within ten years, and now the people who had consented to the trial of a constitutional agitation, were growing impatient. The gentle leader lacked the power of discipline. His very good nature was his undoing. His private troubles still pursued him, and while, according to T. P. O'Connor, in his *Parnell Movement,* he still "made many sacrifices on the altar of the gods of indulgence," he never drank to excess. His creditors were more and more importunate. He was unable to devote his whole time to the cause. He was compelled to practise law to escape the debtors' prison, and, in his old age, when he had grown bulky and found it uncomfortable to travel, he was forced to make hurried trips to the courts in Dublin, reading his briefs on the train or boat. Had he possessed something of Parnell's coldness and hardness and tendency to apply the whip to subordinates, he might have forced a more generous support from his party, but such a policy was foreign to his nature.

Unfortunately, the militant element in Ireland had lost faith in the effectiveness of his leadership. The

Fenians loved him, but felt that he was too gentle for the purpose. The admiration which the English politicians felt for him reacted against him. A new man had entered the ranks of the Irish party—a man who hated England and was hated by Englishmen, a hard driver, a daring politician who was willing to skirt the edge of sedition itself, and he had commenced the obstructive tactics which were to throw the house of commons into turmoil, to convert the sedate house into a bedlam, to prevent the transaction of business, and the radicals in Ireland were looking to him. With such tactics, Butt was temperamentally unable to agree. His health was now failing. He went about the house, worn and dejected. His mind was as brilliant as ever, and his eloquence as persuasive, but his party was slipping away. And then came the tragedy. He was displaced as president of the Home-Rule Confederation of Great Britain by Parnell. He never recovered from the blow, for it came suddenly and unexpectedly. He remained on the platform a while, and then, with the remark that he had to go to Dublin on important business, he excused himself. One of the men responsible for his displacement followed him into the corridor and told him how sorry he was that it was found necessary to select Parnell because of his advanced policy. The eyes of the old man filled with tears. "Ah, I never thought the Irishmen of England would do this to me," he said. The man who had helped to do the work was unable to reply. And then Butt did the characteristic thing—the kindly thing. He took the hand of the man who had struck him and pressed it warmly as a token that all was forgiven.

His last public appearance was at Molesworth hall

on February fourth, 1879, while he was engaged in the famous case of Bagot v. Bagot. He was worn and sad, the stamp of death upon his kindly face. And now must be recorded a brutal thing—some, with whom he had wrought so well and fought so long, ignored him. In three months he was dead. The end came at Dundrum, county Dublin, May fifth, 1879. He was buried at Stranorla, in his native county of Donegal. And then, the whole of Ireland mourned the death of one of the purest, noblest, tenderest of her sons.

VI

Isaac Butt was in many respects a marvelous man. None of the Irish leaders was so profound in learning. Few were more eloquent. None was more lovable. The fact that many Englishmen loved him was not evidence of disloyalty on his part to Ireland. No one could know him and not love him. Gladstone admired him, and Lord Randolph Churchill, who loved few men, was fond of him. One man who hated him and did not know him changed his opinion of him when he found that Butt's sister could not speak of his goodness with an unbroken voice.

As an orator he was noted for his fluency, the profundity of his thought, his clearness of statement, his persuasiveness, his logic. No orator since O'Connell has had a greater effect upon an Irish jury or on an Irish crowd. An illustration of his manner of appealing to the emotional side of a jury may be given from his speech in the case of Clark v. Knox, in which his client, Clark, was suing for the breaking up of his home through eviction. A great number of evictions

had recently taken place, and the attention of the whole country was centered upon the trial at the Tullamore Assize. The speech of Butt was considered a wonderful performance by all who heard it, and at the conclusion the court room rang with applause. Speaking of the meaning of home he said:

"When I addressed you on Saturday I only knew that you were jurors. I know now your position and ranks in the county. I can sympathize with the feelings of men like my client. I may venture to say that I know something of the feelings of the class to which you, gentlemen of the jury, belong; and from a jury drawn from that class I will ask compensation for the sufferings of the peasant with more confidence than I would ask it from men of an inferior rank. The homes of these tenants are made desolate. Some of you will return tonight to your ancestral homes, and far off be the day when you and your children will be disturbed in those homes. Some of you, perhaps, are thinking of the reception that awaits you in those happy homes.

"'"'Tis sweet to hear the honest watchdog's bark
Bay deepmouthed welcome as we draw near home;
'Tis sweet to know that there are eyes will mark
Our coming and grow brighter when we come.'

"You will return to homes in which elegance and refinement will give grace and charm to the endearment of domestic life. But that is not what we value in wife and child and sacred home. There was a welcome as warm and as cordial awaited these poor men in the tenements, now thrown out upon the walls of Rathcore, and there were children there that looked out as fondly through the neighboring darkness for the returning of father. And the blaze of the hearth threw a light as genial and bright upon the little group that will never gather more around the fireside.

"And you, gentlemen, are pretty capable of estimating that the sacred endearments of home were more to these men than to us, for it is a dispensation of God that poverty, as one of its compensations, brings out the affections of the human heart; and the poor family that share the scanty meal, at which each stints himself that the others may have more, may enjoy a happiness in that meal unknown at the boards where luxury abounds."

In the preparation of his speeches, he left little of the principal features to the so-called "inspiration of the moment." The writer is indebted to John Devoy, of the *Gaelic-American,* for an interesting story of his method. It was his custom to write his speeches out in full. This he did with great rapidity, being as fluent with his pen as with his tongue. This done, he read over what he had written very carefully, tore the manuscript to pieces, and threw it away. On one occasion, his secretary carefully collected the pieces, put them together, and with the manuscript in hand, followed Butt in the delivery of his speech, and found, to his amazement, that the orator had not deviated from the written speech to the extent of more than a hundred words.

No better can this brief study of Isaac Butt be brought to a close than by quoting a passage from his National Conference speech of 1873, which is at once an illustration of his most effective style and an invocation from the grave in Donegal to the Irish people:

"Let me say it—I do proudly—that I was one of those who did something for this cause. Over a torn and distracted country, a country agitated by dissensions, weakened by distrust, we raised the banner on which we em-

blazoned the magic words, 'Home Rule.' We raised it with a feeble hand. Tremblingly, with hesitation, almost stealthily, we unfurled that banner to the breeze. But wherever the legend we have emblazoned on its folds was seen, the heart of the people moved to its words and the soul of the nation felt their power and their spell. Those words were passed from man to man along the valleys and the hillsides. Everywhere men, even those who had been despairing, turned to that banner with confidence and hope.

"Thus far we have borne it. It is now for you to bear it on with more energy and more strength and with renewed vigor. We hand it over to you in this gathering of the nation. But oh, let no unholy hands approach it. Let no one come to the help of our country, or dare to lay his hand upon the ark of her magnificent and awful cause, who is not prepared never, never to desert that banner till it flies proudly over the portals of that 'Old House and Home'—that old house which is associated with the memories of great Irishmen, and has been the scene of many glorious triumphs. Even while the blaze of those glories is at this moment throwing its splendor over the memory of us all, I believe in my soul that the parliament of regenerated Ireland will achieve triumphs more glorious, more lasting, more sanctified and holy than any by which her old parliament illumined the annals of our country and our race."

IX

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL

The Obstruction of British Legislation; the Home-Rule Battles; the Land League Fights; the Enlistment of Irish-Americans in the Struggle

IT was just at the time the bottom was falling out of the Butt experiment in Irish politics that a new man appeared upon the scene. Of all the leaders in the century-old battle for Irish liberties he was the least Irish in his temperament and genius. He lacked the magnetism of O'Connell, the eloquence of Grattan, the fire and dash of Meagher, the lovable qualities of Butt—and he was everything that the typical Irishman is not—taciturn, calculating and retiring. He studied the political situation as he would that of a chess-board. He saw the necessity of united action. He understood the importance of consolidating all the patriotic elements into one common army. He knew that the parliamentarian could do nothing without a militant force behind him, and that the militant could accomplish nothing except through semi-constitutional methods. Coldly, calculatingly, sagaciously he set to work to find a common ground, and he found it in a plan to introduce militancy into the Irish party in the house of commons. Grasping eagerly at every revolutionary element in Ireland and attaching it as a fighting force

behind the parliamentary party, he soon created an organization that startled the ministers of the empire. He turned English weapons against the English by obstructing English legislation, and forced the government to deal with the Irish party. He organized the Irish exiles of the industrial centers of England and attached them to the Irish cause and thus introduced the Irish question into English politics. He rallied about him a party of sufficient magnitude to hold the balance of power in the house of commons, and he played with cabinets with the ease of a cat playing with a mouse. Upsetting ministries, defying governments, obstructing legislation, threatening revolution, establishing the boycott, skirting sedition, he turned parliament into a bedlam, disorganized and disrupted parties, and made Ireland a vital force in the affairs of the empire. He introduced a new method into the Irish fight. He created a movement that could not be shot or incarcerated or coerced. He never compromised, he never conciliated, he never trusted the enemy—he fought! And before he fell a victim to his own personal folly, he had introduced Fenianism into parliament, and injected parliamentarianism into the Fenians. Man of mystery, he moves across the page of history a calm, silent, saturnine figure—and posterity instinctively uncovers with mingled fear and admiration. Such in brief is Charles Stewart Parnell.

I

While wandering about in his travels, John Henry Parnell, scion of a house famous in the political and literary history of Ireland, lingered long enough in

Washington to lose his heart to the brilliant and fiery daughter of Charles Stewart, a gallant admiral of the American navy. A strange match, in some respects, for he was utterly without ambition, and she was instinctively a lover of power. Between the two there was one common obsession—an inveterate, ineradicable hatred of England. Returning with his bride to Ireland, the traveler retired to his ancestral seat at Avondale, near the quaint little village of Rathdrum, and settled down to the uneventful life of a country gentleman. The situation was pleasant enough. The house itself, while not so imposing as others, possessed the aristocratic dignity of a baronial mansion. Many men of genius had passed in and out its portals. In the little gallery, above the great hall, bands had once played to stately dances. On the wall of the hall hung a picture of a scene in the house of commons—Curran in one of his eloquent moments. From the windows one could see the poetic little river of Avonmore winding its way through the meadows, and beyond loomed the picturesque hills of Wicklow. Within easy walking distance was the beautiful vale of Avoca—the "sweet vale of Avoca" sung by Moore. And it was here, in this old house, amid these exquisite pastoral scenes, beloved of painters and poets, that Charles Stewart Parnell was born on June twenty-seven, 1846.

The mystery which enfolds the latter life of the great Irish leader is not absent from his childhood. Delicate, morbidly sensitive, nervous, he was nevertheless vivacious and cheerful and passionately devoted to the members of his family. He inherited his father's devotion to home and his partiality to seclu-

sion. It does not appear that he was especially impressed by the brilliancy of his ancestors. It is hardly probable that he ever gave a passing glance at the elfish figure of the eloquent Curran. The poems of Thomas Parnell, the speeches of Sir John Parnell—for these he cared nothing. His boyhood seems to have been given up largely to games and fighting.

It was in his sixth year that he made his first acquaintance with the England he so thoroughly hated, when he was sent to a boarding school in Somersetshire, and it was during these years that his intense hatred for the English people first manifested itself. His preparatory course was characterized by a stubborn insubordination, utter idleness and indifference. He took no pains to conceal his dislike of his English schoolmates, and they were equally frank in their manifestations of contempt. Among the instructors he was as heartily disliked as among the students. The whole of his scholastic interest appears to have been centered on mathematics, and in this line he excelled. Reserved, cold, repellent, he went his way cherishing his hatred of the English.

In his nineteenth year he was entered at Magdalen College, Cambridge, and here he remained four years without distinguishing himself, and left without taking his degree. His hate for the English, which must have been an inherited hate, because he knew practically nothing of the history of the oppression of his race, was only intensified at Cambridge. He had as little to do with the English students as possible. "These English," he said to his brother, "do not like us and we must stand up to them." This feeling was instinctive with him. It never left him. It was to be-

come the inspiration of his career. It was to win to his constitutional agitation the support of the revolutionary societies! If he never entered an Irish school in boyhood, he was to carry back to Ireland from the schools across the channel an inveterate hate of the oppressor. One thing, then, stands out in connection with his period of education—his hate of England. This, we shall find unwavering to the end.

The period previous to his participation in politics was as much of a puzzle as that of his youth. When he returned to Avondale he gave every indication of a disposition to settle down to the prosy, peaceful country life of a country gentleman. His education had been a dismal failure. Of the inspiring story of Ireland's century-old fight for the righting of her wrongs he knew as little as of the tribal life of the African wilderness. Then followed a series of events that turned his mind into political channels.

One day he accompanied his favorite sister, Fanny, the poet, to the office of *The Irish People,* the revolutionary journal of the Fenians, and then learned, to his mystification, that the gentle, lovable, womanly Fanny was an ardent Fenian. This interested him.

A little later, when the writ of habeas corpus had been suspended, and the Castle was proceeding vigorously against the Fenians, a crowd of insolent police pushed into the home of his mother, where the lord lieutenant had often broken bread, and searched the premises for evidence against his sister, who was forced to fly by night from the protection of her own roof. This outraged him.

And then came the legal assassination of the Manchester martyrs, and Parnell realized, for the first time,

that England sat in judgment on Irish affairs, and that his own people were impotent slaves. This set him to thinking, but he kept his own councils, then, as afterward.

It was about this time that the vote by ballot had been extended, and he eagerly seized upon this reform as an opportunity for fighting England in her own household, through the organization of an Irish party, militant, uncompromising, England-hating, which should enter parliament and compromise the very institutions of the enemy by reducing them to impotency and ridicule. His plans were forming.

At length, a vacancy having occurred in the representation of Dublin, he decided to make the plunge, and offered himself for the constituency. He had nothing to offer to the Irish leaders but his name—and that meant much. "I will trust any of the Parnells," said John Martin, one of the veterans of '48, at a conference of the party managers, and the aspiring politician was summoned. A distinguished group of veteran leaders awaited him. He reached the hall a stranger—a tall, delicate, slender youth—and the veterans gave a tremendous ovation to the scion of one of the most patriotic houses in Ireland. Without the slightest expression of appreciation, he proceeded to the platform, deadly pale, but cold and with downcast head. He began to speak and he instantly made an impression. He impressed T. W. Russell with his utter political ignorance, and he impressed O'Connor Power with the feeling that he possessed nothing but a name. It was then too late to turn back, however, and Parnell entered the contest, which resulted, after a short sharp battle, in his defeat. Then it was when

he mystified the leaders of his party, who had given him three hundred pounds for election expenses. The contest had cost him two thousand pounds, and, after his defeat, he returned the three hundred pounds to his party, untouched. Even more mystified than the party leaders were the intimate friends and relatives of the defeated candidate, who beheld him returning to Avondale bubbling over with enthusiasm, confidence and fight, and exclaiming, "Well, boys, I am beaten, but they are not done with me yet."

It was in the spring of 1875 that his opportunity came with a vacancy in the representation of Meath, and Parnell instantly was put up by the Nationalists. It is interesting to know that his candidacy did not meet with the unqualified approval of all the Nationalists, many of whom made strenuous efforts to persuade Sir Charles Gavan Duffy to stand instead. During the contest Parnell spoke without much effect, but utterly without embarrassment, and was elected. There was much enthusiasm at Trim, where the declaration of the poll was made, but while the crowds were cheering and the bonfires blazing, the new member of parliament was discovered walking alone with a cold air of detachment from the parochial house to his hotel. The crowd made a rush, picked him up, carried him several times around the bonfire that was blazing in his honor and set him on a cask, where he made a brief speech of appreciation. And now, what will he do with it?

In his recent work, *The History of the Irish Parliamentary Party,* F. H. O'Donnell lays great stress upon Parnell's utter lack of preparation for a career of political leadership, and especially upon the density

Sydney P. Hall Photograph by Geoghegan

Charles Stewart Parnell

of his ignorance of Irish history at the time of his election to parliament. Of this there can be no doubt. He had heard of Grattan's parliament—that was all. He had listened rather listlessly no doubt to the recollections of '98 from the lips of a number of old men. He was familiar with the name of O'Connell, but of his great career he knew practically nothing. He had never heard of the Grey Coercion bill, which had meant so much to his countrymen. He knew about the Manchester martyrs and the Fenian Brotherhood —and that was about the extent of his historical knowledge. As an orator he had been a tragic failure. As for the leadership of men he had demonstrated no capacity at all—indeed, had manifested rather a disposition to drive men from him rather than to attract them to him. And yet within four years we shall find him lashing his hated England into furious frenzy, and awakening a long-slumbering hope in the breasts of the Irish people. And through it all we shall find him the same, cold, distant, mysterious personality—the same inexplicable sphinx.

II

On the day that Parnell took his seat in the house of commons, Isaac Butt, the leader of the Irish party, sauntered over to Joseph Biggar, a rough and tumble fighter from Ulster, and instructed the unpolished but patriotic Presbyterian merchant to take the floor and hold it for a while. All unwittingly, Butt prepared the way for his own ultimate undoing. The comparatively uncouth subordinate took the floor and held it with a speech of interminable length, reading reams

of reports, pages of statistics, a goodly portion of the *Blue Book,* and a fair proportion of the *Statutes,* until the English members sought relief in flight to the cloak rooms and corridors. One desperate member called attention to the absence of a quorum. Mr. Biggar resumed his seat until the house again filled, when he continued his speech—reading from the newspapers. At length, after three hours had been consumed, the speaker took advantage of the rule to the effect that the member's voice must reach the speaker's ear to call the Ulster patriot's attention to his apparent inability to make himself heard on account of the condition of his voice.

"Ah," smiled the imperturbable Mr. Biggar, "that is because I am too far away"—and with that he gathered together his hastily collected and none too carefully selected library and his glass of water and moved down almost under the speaker's nose.

"Since you have not heard me," purred the innocent Mr. Biggar, "perhaps I should begin all over again." And he continued an hour longer, while the English members groaned and cursed inwardly.

During this performance Mr. Biggar had one amused and sympathetic auditor in the person of Parnell, who noted with infinite delight the maddening effect upon the hated Englishmen and the possibilities of obstructing the transaction of business. In the brisk crude merchant from Ulster he beheld a kindred spirit—unlettered, perhaps, uninformed possibly as to Irish history, and no doubt knowing little of the finesse of parliamentary procedure, but possessed of fighting proclivities and a boundless contempt for English opinion. Parnell made a mental note of Biggar and

his performance. In the smoking room the new member for Meath never tired of listening to Biggar's ruminations of the gentlemanly policy of the Irish party. "What's the good?" he would exclaim, bristling. "They stop our bills, why don't we stop theirs? No legislation; that's the policy, sir; that's the policy. Butt's a fool; too gentlemanly; we're all too gentlemanly." And there was another member whose views were music to the ears of Parnell. This was Joseph Ronayne, who had sat for Cork since '72, and had come to the conclusion that England would never consider Irish business until the Irish prevented the consideration of English legislation. Parnell was instinctively partial to the pursuit of such a policy. It spelled action, it meant fight.

But with that patience for which he became famous he bided his time, kept his own counsels and prepared. "An obscure, inactive member," says Mr. O'Donnell in his history. Perhaps so—but not an indifferent one.

During the first session he scarcely opened his mouth. He was busy studying the battlefield, acquainting himself with the strategic points, familiarizing himself with the weaknesses in the defenses of the enemy. Utterly ignorant of parliamentary procedure and cognizant of the necessity of mastering the generalship of the floor, he read no books to glean the necessary information. There was nothing of the subjective in Parnell—he was all objective. He learned by experience. He mastered the rules by breaking them. He converted the ministers into head-masters and learned from them. There was nothing of false pride, nothing of affectation in his nature, and he frankly plead guilty to his ignorance and unblushingly asked for in-

formation. "How do you get material for questioning the ministers?" he asked one day of an old member. With a pitying smile he was informed of the process. "Ah," said Parnell, "I must ask a question myself some day." And it was through careful observation and the unembarrassed propounding of innumerable questions that he became a perfect master of the rules of debate, a parliamentary general unequaled, perhaps, by any other member but Gladstone. At the close of his first session he remained obscure, but he had learned the game. He had done no shooting but he had possessed himself of arms and ammunition. He emerged from his first session thoroughly satisfied of the futility of mere parliamentary warfare and of the necessity of organizing a virile fighting force outside the house of commons. Thus do we find him from the very beginning cleverly laying his plans for the utilization of the Fenians. A fighting party within, a fighting force without—this was Parnell's plan of campaign.

The conditions during the session of '76 were auspicious for the perfection of his plan. Gladstone had retired and Disraeli held the reins of power, with Hicks-Beach occupying the post as chief secretary for Ireland. Divided on all other propositions, the English parties had tacitly agreed to move as a single body against any proposal of remedial legislation for the subjugated people across the channel. The customary batch of Irish bills were presented by Butt and, after scant consideration, overwhelmingly voted down. The Irish party was a pitiful and impotent phantom—hardly a shadow in the sunshine of English complacency. The brief and contemptuous speeches of

ministers against the Irish bills only served to accentuate the humiliation of the Irish people. It was during the delivery of one of these ministerial remarks, however, that Parnell found the opportunity of making a subtle appeal for Fenian support.

While discussing, quite languidly, the Home-Rule bill, Hicks-Beach expressed his surprise that any one should fancy that home rule would result in the release of the Fenian prisoners or the "Manchester murderers." Up to the characterization of the Manchester martyrs, Parnell had sat in an apparently bored silence, but at the words "the Manchester murderers," he startled the sedate house by crying out with intense vehemence—"No, no." The house was ineffably shocked. It was pleased in its self-complacency to interpret Parnell's protest as a justification for murder. Hicks-Beach cast a withering look of scorn upon the obscure member from Meath, and amid English cheers expressed his regret that "there is an honorable member who will apologize for murder." From every section of the house came the arrogant cry, "withdraw," "withdraw." And then, to the amazement of the representatives of English constituencies, the obscure Irishman, whom they had assumed to have been crushed under the weight of their scorn, rose with a cold and composed dignity, and in frigid cutting tones replied:

"The right honorable gentleman looked at me so directly when he said that he regretted that any member of the house should apologize for murder that I wish to say, as publicly as I can, that I do not believe and never shall believe that any murder was committed at Manchester."

There was a moment of awed silence—a few spasmodic cheers from the startled Irish members, and the incident closed as far as the house was concerned. But beyond the walls of Westminster and throughout Ireland, the bold defiance of Parnell passed like an electric shock. The Fenians, who had grown tired of the gentlemanly methods of Butt, were not only pleased at the defense of their martyrs, but they were delighted at the unique spectacle of an Irish member of parliament accepting an English challenge. Their eyes were now turned to Parnell, and, from afar, they followed his activities with an intense interest. They knew that there was at least one member of the parliamentary party who would fight, one at least who frankly hated England. We have it on the authority of Barry O'Brien that this incident marked the beginning of the close alliance which was to follow between the Fenians and the member from Meath.

Meanwhile, the advanced Nationalists sent a deputation to President Grant with an address of congratulation on the centennial of American independence, and Parnell was placed upon the delegation. It was upon his return from America that the future leader delivered his first ambitious speech at a Home-Rule meeting in Liverpool. It appears that but for the substance of this address it would have been a tragic failure. The delivery was exceedingly bad, halting, nervous, irritating to the audience, which momentarily feared a complete breakdown. Standing with clenched fists which he nervously shook while awaiting the proper word, he presented a pitiful picture. His anxious friends upon the platform at times whispered a word that seemed required, but—and this is worth noting—

not once did Parnell accept the word, and not once did he fail to improve upon the word suggested. It was the substance of the speech, however, that is worth noticing as indicating the trend of his thoughts just previous to his acceptance of the grave responsibilities of leadership. He said, in part:

"You have also another duty to perform, which is to educate public opinion in England upon Irish questions, which I have looked upon as a difficult and an almost impossible task—so difficult that I have often been tempted to think that it was no use trying to educate English public opinion. The English press encourages prejudice against Ireland. Englishmen themselves are in many respects fair-minded and reasonable, but it is almost impossible to get at them—it requires intelligence almost superhuman to remove the clouds of prejudice under which they have lived during their lives. I know the difficulties of the Irish people in England. It is not easy for people, living as they are in friendship with their English neighbors, to keep themselves separated from English political organizations, but they have never been afraid to lay aside private and local considerations in favor of supporting their fellow countrymen at home. Our position in Ireland is peculiar. One party says we go too far in the Home-Rule agitation while another party says we do not go far enough. You have been told we have lowered the national flag—that the Home-Rule cause is not the cause of Ireland as a nation, and that we will degrade our country into the position of a province. I deny all this. There is no reason why Ireland under Home Rule would not be Ireland a nation in every sense and for every purpose that is right she should be a nation. I have lately seen in the city of New York a review of the militia, in which five or six thousand armed and trained men took part, at least half of them being veterans of the war. They marched past with firm step and armed with improved weapons. They were at the com-

mand of the legislature of New York and they could not budge one inch from the city without the orders of the governor. If in Ireland we could ever have under Home Rule such a militia, they would be in position to protect the interests of Ireland as a nation, while they would never wish to trespass upon the integrity of the British empire, or to do harm to those they then would call their English brothers. It is a foolish want of confidence that prevents Englishmen and the English government from trusting Ireland. They know that Ireland is determined to be an armed nation, and they fear to see her so, for they remember how a section of the Irish people in 1782, with arms in their hands, wrung from England legislative independence. Without a full measure of Home Rule for Ireland no Irishman can ever rest content."

It was in his Liverpool speech that Parnell began to make his appeal to the Irish in England who were in later years to become such potent factors in placing the English parties at the mercy of the man from Meath. He had already worked out his plan of an Irish party standing absolutely aloof from all English party entanglements, and prepared to fight any ministry of any political complexion that refused to concede Irish rights. To impart the needed virility to such a party, he knew that it would have to be a fighting machine that would appeal to the Fenians. But it was not alone the Fenians that he wanted to enlist in the war he was planning—it was every element of the Irish people. It was in the harmonizing of the various divergent elements that Parnell disclosed his marvelous political sagacity, his subtle diplomacy. The Fenians stood for force, and the church looked with distrust upon the fighting brotherhood. Parnell knew that one without the other would be fatal. He set to work to

compromise the differences, to amalgamate the elements, to consolidate the whole of Ireland in one supreme effort. Hopeless to all others, it was possible to the patient Parnell, and he succeeded.

It was at the beginning of the session of '77 that Parnell lead off with his fighting policy in open opposition to the gentlemanly tactics of the leader of his party. The queen's speech had scarcely mentioned Ireland, and it disclosed the determination of the ministry to refuse any consideration to Irish subjects. The Irish members were furious at the slight, but the gentle Butt declined to enter upon a policy of deliberate obstruction to English legislation. This over-delicacy of the leader precipitated the revolt. The man from Meath, who had defended the Manchester martyrs, and the merchant from Ulster determined upon a policy of persistent and systematic obstruction, and in the Mutiny and Prison bills they found satisfactory objects of attack. Every possible expedient conceivable to a skilled parliamentarian was resorted to in the effort to delay proceedings. With an icy politeness Parnell made his objections, offered his motions, moved his amendments, with a solemnity and businesslike earnestness discussed his propositions as though he were intensely interested in the perfection of the English measures. There was nothing offensive or unduly aggressive in his manner. There was not the slightest suggestion of an ulterior motive in his tone.

At times, when the English members had been aggravated to the breaking point, the Irish member would graciously withdraw a motion or accept an amendment, leaving the enemy more helpless than before. That he possessed an uncannily dry humor was mani-

fested once during the fight on the Prison bill, and especially when one of his supporters asked that the committee on the bill should be put off because of the early departure of Irish members to attend the grand juries at the assizes in Ireland. This was glaringly an act of obstruction, and Parnell arose with great dignity to enter a protest. "I think the business of the nation should be attended to before local affairs," he said solemnly, "and the attendance at the grand juries is no reason for postponing the committee." The English members, altogether at sea, scarcely knew whether to cheer or groan. It was in connection with the Mutiny bill, however, that Parnell's new tactics aroused the greatest fury in the house. On April twelfth, with the aid of Biggar, he fought clause after clause of the bill until almost midnight, when the member from Ulster rose with a motion to report progress on the ground that owing to the lateness of the hour and the pendency of numerous important amendments, it would be quite impossible to conclude the consideration of the bill that night. Parnell heartily supported his colleague—and the storm broke. It was on this occasion that Butt was persuaded publicly to repudiate and disapprove of the methods of his obstreperous subordinate. His speech of renunciation was greeted with the thunderous applause of all the English members, but that speech and that applause sounded the death knell of his leadership. Not only did the Fenians feel that it showed a popularity among Englishmen incompatible with proper loyalty to Ireland, but they looked upon his attack upon an Irishman in the face of the enemy as an unpardonable violation of the rules of war. The reply of Parnell was characteristic. Coldly,

with icy dignity, apparently without the slightest feeling of resentment, he brushed aside the Butt repudiation with the simple sentence, "The honorable and learned gentleman was not in the house when I attempted to explain why I had not put down notice of my amendments." Henceforth the breach between Butt and Parnell widened rapidly.

Back of Parnell stood now the Fenians, the radicals, the fighting forces and ultimately the church. The Home-Rule Confederation of Great Britain, dominated quietly by the Fenian element, leaned strongly toward Parnell, and it was under its auspices that Parnell was enabled to address numerous Home-Rule meetings in England and Scotland. In all these speeches Parnell met the issue of obstruction boldly and defiantly, albeit with tact and diplomacy. In a speech at Glasgow he said:

"I am satisfied to abide by the decision of the Irish people. Are they for peace and conciliation or for hostility and war? (Cries of 'War.') Are you for making things convenient for England and for advancing English interests? If so, I will bow to your decision, but my constituents will have to get some one else to represent them."

A little later he addressed a great meeting at Manchester, on which occasion he said:

"For my part I must tell you that I do not believe in a policy of conciliation of English feeling or English prejudice. I believe that you may go on trying to conciliate English prejudice until the day of judgment and that you will not get the breadth of my nail from them. What did you ever get in the past by trying to conciliate them?"

A voice—"Nothing except the sword." (Applause.)

"Did you get the abolition of tithes by the conciliation of our English taskmasters? No; it was because we adopted different measures. (Applause.) I rather think that O'Connell in his time was not of a very conciliatory disposition, and that at least during a part of his career he was about the best-abused Irishman living. (Laughter and applause.) Catholic emancipation was gained because an English king and his minister feared revolution. (Applause.) Why was the English church in Ireland disestablished and disendowed? Why was some measure of protection given to the Irish tenant? It was because there was an explosion at Clerkenwell and because a lock was shot off a prison van at Manchester. (Great applause.) We will never gain anything from England unless we tread on her toes; we will never gain a sixpennyworth from her by conciliation." (Applause.)

This was a bold and open bid for Fenian support, and his reference to revolution and the affair at Manchester convinced the Fenians that while Parnell might be a parliamentarian he was not averse to fighting in an emergency. His speeches strengthened him immeasurably in the country and this popular indorsement encouraged him to increase his obstructive activities in the house.

Thus the battle continued. A little later, during the discussion of the South African bill, the government being anxious to put the bill through the committee stage that night, Parnell returned to the attack. Late in the afternoon one of Parnell's supporters moved to report progress, and Parnell supported the motion on the ground that additional information was needed before the house could intelligently act. This aroused the indignation of Sir William Harcourt, who directly charged the Irish leader with deliberate obstruc-

tion. The man from Meath listened coldly to the arraignment, and then, without paying the slightest heed, he turned to the speaker and began, "Sir, I will now continue my observation." This was greeted with a storm of yells. Bedlam broke loose. The English were beside themselves with impotent fury. The chair called the speaker to order. The Irish leader condescendingly complimented the chair upon the fairness of his rulings, and continued. The turmoil became so loud that the voice of Parnell could not be heard—at which he calmly walked from his place to the table and proceeded with his remarks. It was at this juncture that he solemnly warned the English members that by quarreling among themselves they were wasting valuable time. At seven o'clock in the morning the chancellor of the exchequer complimented the Parnellites upon their plucky fight and begged them to yield in view of the physical exhaustion of all the members, but the man from Meath was adamant to the compliment. It was only after twenty-six hours of such scenes that the government prevailed.

The effect on Parnell's fortunes by such conduct was magical. The Fenians, who had lost all confidence in a parliamentary fight, could not but admire the battling ability of the new leader. They were now convinced that their hate of England could not go beyond that of Parnell. They could not but glory in the manner in which he had humiliated all the English parties by reducing English government to a condition bordering on impotency. And throughout Ireland, into every nook and corner, the news was carried that an Irishman had stood up to the English in their own bailiwick and fought them to a finish—holding them

up to the ridicule of the world. The spirit of Ireland was aroused. The fighting blood was stirred. The unification of Irish sentiment followed, and Charles Stewart Parnell became, for the first time, the idol of the people. We shall now see him following up his advantage and perfecting his fighting machine.

III

The militant methods to which Parnell resorted in his parliamentary fights had the effect of breaking down in the minds of a very large proportion of the Fenians the idea that nothing could possibly be accomplished through constitutional agitation. At the same time, his manifest hatred of England, together with his audacity and courage, impelled many of the more radical of the Fenians to believe that he was wasting his time and talents in a hopeless cause, and an earnest effort was made to persuade him to enter the Fenian Brotherhood. Importuned at various times and with persistency to join the organization, he steadfastly refused to become a working member. He had no desire to be in on the inner counsels. He preferred apparently not to know all the plans that were incubating in the Fenian mind. If anything of a revolutionary or lawless nature was being contemplated he wished to remain in ignorance of it—but he didn't propose to criticize it. It was his idea that the Fenians from without should be permitted to go their way and all he asked was that it should not be in a direction contrary to the way trod by the Irish party.

"I do not want to break up your movement," he said to one of the number who was inviting him to join.

"On the contrary, I wish it to go on. Collect arms, do everything you are doing, but let the open movement have a chance, too. We can both help each other, but I am sure I can be of more use in the open movement." It was this peculiar relationship which led many to believe that at heart Parnell was a revolutionist and was in secret sympathy with "political crimes." He doubtless looked with favor upon that phase of the revolutionary movement which made its appeal to the masses of the people. He always left the impression with his Fenian compatriots that he appreciated their friendly attitude toward him and that he entertained a secret sympathy for their purposes—but he never committed himself as to the revolutionary plans of the organization. If he was strong with the Fenians, he was perhaps even stronger with the Clan-na-Gaels of America, who had been deeply impressed by his new idea of parliamentary warfare. When they sent an agent to London to discuss with him a sort of alliance, he attended a meeting called for the purpose, listened to the discussion, kept his own counsel, committed himself to nothing, and yet in some subtle mysterious manner conveyed the unmistakable impression that he was in reality of the same stern stuff as themselves. The fact is, according to Barry O'Brien, who was doubtless in position to judge, that Parnell understood that the parliamentary movement would be ridiculous but for the cooperation of the Fenians, but he did not propose to be placed in a position where he would no longer be able to direct the movement. It was his idea to let the Fenians build up their organization to the utmost and then use it as the fighting force in the background behind his Irish party. It has been said

that he often skirted sedition, often advanced to the verge of lawlessness, but never quite crossed the line. Thus did he win the confidence of the revolutionaries. They felt that if the parliamentary movement failed they could count upon Parnell; and pending the trial of parliamentarianism they were willing that Parnell should count upon them.

In 1878 another element was introduced into the Irish situation—and not of Parnell's initiative. Late in the summer of that year Michael Davitt appeared in America upon an important mission—to advise with the leaders of the Clan-na-Gael on the new aspect of the constitutional movement. Himself a Fenian, he was about won over to the program of the new leader. Indeed, before leaving for America he had a conference with Parnell, to whom he divulged his purpose. The leader listened in sympathetic silence. He offered no suggestions. He sent no message. He kept his counsel. On reaching New York, Davitt met John Devoy, likewise a revolutionist, and now the champion of the new departure. These two got their heads together on a new plan for enlisting the farmers in the national movement through the introduction of an agrarian reform plank into the party platform, and within a month they had succeeded in committing the Clan to their idea through the passage of resolutions attributing the miserable conditions existing in Ireland to the wretched land system in operation. It was their intention to make land reform the paramount plank of the platform of the Parnell party, and as soon as they had won over the majority of the leaders of the Clan, John Devoy, now the veteran editor of the *Gaelic-American,* cabled Parnell, proposing an

alliance between the revolutionary and the constitutional parties. The agitation of the land problem looking to an ultimate peasant proprietary, the exclusion of all sectarian issues, the unification of all Irish members of parliament on all votes, whether on questions of empire or Home-Rule—this was the proposition submitted to Parnell on behalf of a most powerful organization. And to this proposition, from such a source, Parnell made no reply. The fact that this lack of common courtesy failed to dampen the hopes of the intrepid Devoy, or to lead to the repudiation of the leader, indicates the almost uncanny influence that the mysterious personality of Parnell exercised over the people. He had refused to commit himself—and they were satisfied of his cooperation.

Meanwhile, Davitt returned to Ireland and inaugurated his now famous land fight by the organization of "Tenant Defense Associations" throughout the country. The conditions were ripe for some such movement. The Land Act of 1870 had proved its futility as a measure of relief, and the downtrodden peasantry, in dire distress, was looking forward to another period of intense suffering. They foresaw their inability to meet their rents followed by more wholesale evictions—those heart-breaking incidents so familiar to the Irish people. The landlords, with characteristic effrontery and brutality, were manifesting no disposition to prevent the oncoming distress. Hopeless and desperate, their backs to the wall, the tenants were prepared for any proposition looking to the amelioration of their condition. The meetings throughout the island were largely attended, and among the dominating figures at these public gatherings the most

prominent were the Fenians. The nationalist movement was beginning to reach the submerged, the most downtrodden and browbeaten element in Ireland.

And Parnell—what was he doing at this juncture?

He was studying the field, pulsing the people, getting his bearings, considering the general effect upon his movement, determining for himself the possibilities of the new association. He abstained from attending the Davitt meetings—but he got his reports. He looked down upon the new movement from the great height of his political genius. At length he was urged to attend a land meeting at Westport, County Mayo, and after some hesitation he decided to take the plunge. It was in his speech on this occasion that his brief injunction to the tenants, "Keep a firm grip upon your homesteads," was to intensify the enthusiasm of the militant forces and to startle the conservatives of England. He said:

"A fair rent is a rent a tenant can reasonably pay according to the times; but in bad times a tenant can not be expected to pay as much as he did in good times, three or four years ago. If such rents are insisted upon a repetition of the scenes of 1847 and 1848 will be witnessed. Now, what must we do to induce the landlords to see the position? You must show the landlords that you intend to hold a firm grip on your homesteads and lands. You must not allow yourselves to be dispossessed as you were dispossessed in 1847. You must not allow your small holdings to be turned into large ones. I am not supposing that the landlords will remain deaf to the voice of reason, but I hope they may not, and that on those properties on which the rents are out of all proportion to the times that a reduction may be made, and that immediately. If not you must help yourselves, and the public opinion of the world will stand by you

and support you in your struggle to defend your homesteads. I should be deceiving you if I told you that there was any use in relying upon the exertions of the Irish members of parliament in your behalf. I think that if your members are determined and resolute that they could help you, but I am afraid they won't. I hope that I may be wrong, and that you may rely upon the constitutional action of your parliamentary representatives in this the sore time of your need and trial; but above all things remember that God helps him who helps himself, and that by showing such a public spirit as you have shown here to-day, by coming in your thousands in the face of every difficulty, you will do more to show the landlords the necessity of dealing justly with you than if you had one hundred and fifty Irish members in the house of commons."

The effect of this cold, stern proposition of resistance was further to inflame the tenants, enthuse the Fenians and startle the government with its doctrine of revolt. It meant something rather new in the agrarian fights of Ireland. It meant war! And meanwhile the government, either through stupidity or stubbornness, made no effort to meet the trouble on the way. Conditions grew rapidly worse, and it soon became evident that thousands of the suffering peasantry would find themselves face to face with evictions. And then came the monster meeting at Limerick in the spring of '79—a meeting pregnant with the spirit of revolution, pulsating with passion. In the midst of the seething, surging multitude, shouting for a republic, demanding an appeal to force, Parnell sat calm, cold, unmoved. When called upon to speak he delivered his message in a few crisp, energetic, dictatorial sentences and his advice was this: "Stand by your guns and there is no power on earth which can prevail, against the hun-

dreds of thousands of tenant farmers in this country." This was not demagoguery—it was treason! It was a bugle call to the people to rise and stand erect. And then some time later came the great meeting at Tipperary where Parnell again sought to stiffen the backs of the tenants to a fighting posture: "You must rely upon your own determination which has enabled you to survive the famine years and to be present here today, and if you are determined, I tell you that you have the game in your hands."

The country was now ablaze, and tenant defense associations were organized and active in every nook and corner of the island. It was at this juncture that Davitt determined upon the domination of these scattered organizations through a central committee established in the city of Dublin. It was now apparent to Parnell that a movement of immense magnitude and potentiality had been set on foot and that it was impossible to foresee the effect upon the future. The central committee smacked of Jacobinism. The whole thing pointed to revolution. Possibly it was to be a Frankenstein. But he was now convinced that nothing could stop it and that it would inevitably become an engine for immense harm or good. It was Fenianism turned in a practical direction. In a collision, the parliamentary party would go down. He had absorbed the Fenian. He now took in the Land League. Thus did Parnell subordinate everything to Home Rule—thus did he enlist every element in Ireland in the fight.

As the Land League meetings multiplied in number and intensified in determination the government, which had taken no action to prevent the threatened distress, decided to proceed against the new movement,

and Davitt, along with others, was arrested. The following day Parnell took the platform and defied the government by a brazen repetition of the offense which had led to the proceedings against Davitt. Confronted now by an aroused nation and despairing of securing a jury that would convict, the prosecution of the leaguers was dropped—and the agitation continued.

Such was the condition of affairs when the league concluded to send Parnell to America to appeal for the funds necessary to protect the tenantry and to resist evictions. It was not a mission that appealed to the taste of the Irish leader. He heartily disliked speaking and shunned crowds, but with that prescience which characterized his leadership he instantly saw the immense advantage that must accrue from the cultivation of the American people and the consequential consolidation of the Irish race throughout the world in the interest of Home Rule. Little did the Land League realize perhaps the genius in its conception. The spectacular tour of its leader was to lay the foundation for that hearty cooperation of the Irish exiles which was to contribute so much to the fighting equipment of the patriots at home. In his *History of the Irish Parliamentary Party,* F. H. O'Donnell bitterly denounces Parnell for his cultivation of "American dollars," but it is quite impossible to comprehend his scorn in view of the comparative helplessness of the Irish party during the last thirty years but for the financial assistance of the exiles over seas. During a century and more the Irish-Americans had on many an occasion sent their dollars to the relief of the famine-stricken people at home, but it was left to Parnell

to make them understand that they were a part of the Home-Rule army—a vital part.

The tour of the leader was a succession of tremendous ovations—a triumphal journey. Cities contended for the honor of entertaining him. Senators, governors, congressmen, attended him everywhere, and immense multitudes, too great to find accommodation in the largest halls in the country, poured forth to hear his message. The American house of representatives paid him the rare tribute of inviting him to speak to the American people from its rostrum, and then adjourned to attend a reception in his honor at the Willard Hotel. An immense concourse of people met him when he landed in New York and Parnell took occasion to explain his mission with a force and earnestness which instantly struck a sympathetic chord in the American breast.

"We have to aim against a system which causes discontent and suffering in our country," he said, "and we have to endeavor to break down that system. And with God's help we are determined to break it down. We are also to see that the victims of that system are not suffered to perish. In the meantime we are to take care that the unity and strength of our people are not broken, and that now, when the opportunity has really come for the settlement of one of the leading questions in Ireland, the opportunity may not be lost. The physical suffering and misery and starvation of large portions of our population in Ireland has not been exaggerated. We have been calling upon the government for eight months to relieve that distress, but it has only been within the last few days that the English government has agreed to admit that there is any distress. This was brought to their notice by a letter from the Duchess of Marlborough, wife of the lord lieutenant, which stated there was going

to be a famine and dire distress during the coming winter. . . . We feel that we can no longer shut our eyes to the terrible peril that is approaching, and we think that we ought to put the case before our own countrymen, both at home and here in America, and endeavor to enlist sympathy with our efforts. We believe that in this country the sympathy accorded will be generous and noble despite the efforts of the English press to depreciate the merits of the American nation."

The wonderful outpouring of people, the marvelous manifestation of enthusiastic sympathy seemed to inspire Parnell in his efforts and the series of speeches he delivered, touching with a master hand upon every phase of the Irish question that appealed to the Irish-Americans, left an indelible impression upon the American mind—an impression that persists.

At Cleveland he did not fail to hold forth a vague hope for the Fenian fighters when he said:

"It has given me great pleasure during my visit to the cities of this country to see the armed regiments of Irishmen who have frequently turned out to escort us; and when I saw some of these gallant men to-day, who are even now in this hall, I thought that each one of them must wish, with Sarsfield of old, when dying upon a foreign battlefield—'Oh, that I could carry these arms for Ireland.' Well, it may come to that some day or other."

It was at St. Louis that he reached the heights of his eloquence:

"No, we will stand by our country, whether we are exterminated by famine to-day, or discriminated by English bayonets to-morrow, the people of Ireland are determined to uphold the God-given right of Ireland—to take her place among the nations of the world. Our

tenantry are engaged in a struggle of life and death with the Irish landlords. It is no use to attempt to conceal the issues which have been made there. The landlords say that there is not room for both tenants and landlords, and that the people must go, and the people have said that the landlords must go."

And then the orator proceeded to foreshadow his marvelous fight against coercion when he said:

"Now the cable announces to us to-day that the government is about to attempt to renew the famous Irish coercion acts which expired this year. Let me explain to you what these coercion acts are. Under them the lord lieutenant of Ireland is entitled at any time to proclaim in any Irish county, forbidding any inhabitant of that county to go outside of his door after dark. No man is permitted to carry a gun or to handle arms in his house; and the farmers of Ireland are not even permitted to shoot at the birds when they eat the seed corn on their freshly sowed land. Under these acts it is also possible for the lord lieutenant of Ireland to have any man arrested and consigned to prison without charge, and without bringing him to trial; to keep him in prison as long as he pleases; and circumstances have been known where the government has arrested prisoners under these coercion acts, and has kept them in solitary confinement for two years and not allowed them to see a single relative or to communicate with a friend during all that period, and has finally forgotten the existence of the helpless prisoners. And this is the infamous code which England is seeking to reenact. I tell you, when I read this despatch, strongly impressed as I am with the magnitude and vast importance of the work in which we are engaged in this country, that I feel strongly tempted to hurry back to Westminster in order to show this English government whether it shall dare, in this year 1880, to renew this odious code with as much facility as it has done in former years."

In a series of such speeches Parnell aroused a greater interest in Irish affairs on the part of the American people than had ever before been felt in history, and one stormy March day as he stood, bareheaded on the bridge of the outgoing ship, the rain beating down upon him, as he gravely saluted the gallant Sixty-ninth Regiment which had gathered to see him off, he had the best of evidence of the success of his mission in the two hundred thousand dollars that he was carrying back to Ireland to use in the fight for the tenants.

He had consolidated the Irish at home; he had organized the Irish in England to the point where they had become a vital factor in the political life of the country; and now he was going home with the consciousness that he had enrolled the Irish-Americans in the battle of Home Rule.

Hardly had he landed in Ireland when a political crisis was precipitated by the dissolution of the government, and he was immediately plunged into a general election. To the English end of the contest Parnell paid but little heed. In English leaders he had but little confidence. It was with Irish constituencies that he was primarily concerned, and he threw himself into the fight in Ireland with a passionate intensity that set the island ablaze. He was a veritable demon in battle. Day and night, without rest, without sleep, he devoted himself to bringing out candidates, superintending the details of the campaign, addressing immense crowds as at Cork where he aroused an audience of thirty thousand, speaking in villages and hamlets. The man who disliked speaking developed Napoleonic qualities of speech. "Citizens of Cork," he said, the

night before the election as he faced an immense throng assembled under his windows at the hotel: "This is the night before the battle. To your guns then." And they responded. When the smoke lifted it was found that the liberals under Gladstone had swept England, and that in Ireland out of the one hundred and five seats Parnell had captured sixty. We shall now behold him, the head of a strongly organized and thoroughly consolidated army, opening fire upon the oppressors across the channel all along the line.

IV

When the liberals went into power with the aid of the Irish and Gladstone became prime minister, Parnell and his following took seats with the opposition, thus emphasizing his point that while his party would, from time to time, effect a temporary working arrangement with another party, it would necessarily remain in opposition to the government until the Irish wrongs had been completely righted. Notwithstanding the agrarian disturbances and the activity of the Land League the queen's speech did not mention the land question in Ireland as among the topics to receive the consideration of the government. It now appears that Gladstone, who resembled practically all English statesmen in this regard, was really ignorant of conditions in Ireland and had assumed that the miserably inadequate Land Act of 1870 had settled the land problem for all time to come.

Upon this point Parnell quickly disillusioned him. Almost immediately he brought in a bill to stay evictions and to award compensation in the event of any

disturbances. This measure went beyond the possibility of governmental concession at that time, but Forster, the chief secretary, frankly confessed that he was not prepared to reject the principle, and a little later he brought in his own "Compensation for Disturbance" bill, which provided that the evicted tenant should be entitled to compensation when he had proved to the satisfaction of the court his inability to pay, the fact that such inability grew out of bad harvests, and that he had expressed his willingness to continue his tenancy on just and reasonable terms which had been rejected by the landlord. This measure, which was a step in the right direction, failed to obtain the unanimous support of the liberal party, but it easily passed second reading by a vote of 295 to 217. After the bill had been greatly weakened by concessions to the landlords, it passed on third reading and went to the house of lords where it was promptly rejected with every manifestation of contempt.

The defeat of this measure was the signal for the beginning of the war. It was now evident that nothing could be expected from the government to relieve the situation in Ireland. The agitation in that unhappy island increased a hundredfold. Every eviction was attended by a riot. The tenant who had dared to take a place from which another had been evicted was assaulted and his property destroyed. It was under these conditions that Parnell decided to declare war upon the ministry he had helped to place in power. He entertained not a scintilla of faith in its sincerity. He realized that nothing further could be accomplished by discussion or agitation in the house of commons, and he hurried back to Ireland to urge upon the ten-

ants the revolutionary necessity of protecting themselves—and that could only mean by force of one kind or another. In the despair of the tenants he saw the opportunity to make the Land League as strong a power as the Catholic Association of O'Connell—and he made it stronger.

Thus it was that one day, in late September, Parnell stood up before an immense throng at Ennis, and, in a speech, cold, concise and deliberative, threw down the gauntlet in such a manner as to make a profound impression upon the country.

"Depend upon it that the measure of the Land bill next session will be the measure of your activity and energy this winter," he said. "It will be the measure of your determination not to pay unjust rents; it will be the measure of your determination to keep a firm grip on your homesteads. It will be the measure of your determination not to bid for farms from which others have been evicted, and to use the strong force of public opinion to deter any unjust man amongst yourselves—and there are many such—from bidding for such farms. Now, what are you to do to a tenant who bids for a farm from which his neighbor has been evicted?"

(Much excitement and cries of "Shoot him.")

"Now, I think I heard some one say, 'Shoot him,'" Parnell continued softly, entirely unmoved. "I wish to point out to you a much better way—a more Christian and a more charitable way—which will give the lost sinner an opportunity of repenting. When a man takes a farm from which another has been evicted, you must show him on the roadside when you meet him, you must show him in the streets of the town, you must show him at the shop counter, you must show him at the fair and in the market place, and even in the house of worship, by leaving him severely alone, by putting him into a moral Coventry, by isolating him from his kind as if

he were a leper of old—you must show him your detestation of the crime he has committed, and you may depend upon it that there will be no man so full of avarice, so lost to shame, as to dare the public opinion of all right thinking men and to transgress your unwritten code of laws."

Not so eloquent perhaps as other famous speeches, but few have been so historic or effective, for this speech at Ennis brought the boycott into action for the first time. The tremendous import of the new proposition was not lost upon the governmental authorities. In England it was looked upon as scarcely less than anarchy. In Ireland it aroused the most intense enthusiasm. It delighted the Fenians and it won the farmers. And after he had won the farmers through the propaganda of the Land League he hastened to impress upon their minds the essential connection between land reform and the restoration of the legislative independence of the country. Thus did he give expression to his marvelous political sagacity. The Land League was not his creature. It was forced upon him. And just at the juncture where it threatened to supplant the Home-Rule movement he stepped in and took the leadership to the end that he might lead the league, and with it all the farmers who had hitherto held back from the political movement, into the Home-Rule camp.

This done, the league grew with phenomenal rapidity both in numbers and in power. It had touched the sympathy of the American people, and largely through the enthusiastic cooperation of Patrick Ford, the brilliant and militant editor of *The Irish World* of New York, thousands of dollars—American dollars, so

much despised by Mr. O'Donnell—poured into the coffers of the organization. The league soon overshadowed the power of the Castle. The masses of the people accepted its dictum as law. Its orders were obeyed. The suggestions of its leaders were adopted. It took on the dignity of a provisional government. And meanwhile the misery of the people increased. Nowhere in all of Europe—not even in the most poverty-stricken parts of Europe—was there such suffering. Thousands unable to pay their rent were brutally thrown out upon the highway to starve. Women who were sick were carried out into the road upon their cots and left exposed to the elements. Outrages innumerable were committed in retaliation. Bands of desperate tenants scoured the country carrying the torch of the incendiary from house to house.

The battle was on in earnest—it was the government versus the Land League, and Gladstone, in a fury at his own impotency, determined to suppress the powerful organization which had reduced his Irish government to a shadow. Lord Cowper, the lord lieutenant, was in the Castle—but Parnell was king! After his favorite fashion the Irish leader was skilfully skirting sedition—but he kept within the law. The government feared him, hated him, thought him capable of going any length, but it could fix no specific crime upon him. He went his way. He did not march with the incendiaries—but he set Ireland on fire.

And the government?

It was a house divided against itself. The officials in Ireland urged the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus—another favorite Irish remedy—but the ministry drew back and urged the exhausting of all the

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ordinary remedies and the prosecution of the leaders of the league. The problem was no longer the amelioration of the conditions of the starving tenantry, but the discovery of incendiarism in the speeches of Parnell and Davitt and their followers. The government was too intent on watching these gentlemen to pay any heed to the starving children, evicted to perish like beasts upon the highway. The letters that were exchanged at this time between Lord Cowper and the ministry throw a pitiful light upon the miserable policy of the period—complaints of the lawful nature of the speeches, of the sympathy of the people with the lawbreakers, of the bitterness manifested against the landlords, of the increasing power of the league.

And then the government struck!

Early in November Parnell and his lieutenants were arrested on the charge of conspiracy to prevent the payment of rent, to resist evictions and to prevent the taking of farms from which a tenant had been evicted. When served with the papers Parnell merely smiled —his cold slow smile. It was as silly as the arresting of a soldier in the midst of the sacking of a conquered city. A few days after the arrest the Irish leader, speaking to a multitude in Dublin, took occasion to express his open contempt for the proceedings of the court. He was hailed as a hero everywhere. The city of Limerick presented him with the freedom of the city. And then came the trial—a long-drawn legal battle full of sound and fury signifying nothing —and then the failure of the prosecution. Walking like a conqueror from the court room, he was given an ovation by the thousands in the streets, who shouted lustily, "Long live the chief." That night bonfires

were blazing on all the hilltops. The ordinary processes of the law had failed.

What next?

The inevitable thing under such governmental conditions—the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus—coercion, a governmental reign of terror, a reversion to first principles. The fight of Parnell now shifted back to Westminster, where he made one of the most remarkable and picturesque fights against the Forster Coercion bill that has ever been witnessed in the English parliament. With marvelous dexterity, untiring, determined, he interposed between the government and the passage of the bill every parliamentary device known to man. Every possible scheme of obstruction was brought into play. The Irish party slept upon their arms—rather, they slept not at all. At length, worn to a frazzle, desperate in its impotency, the government, finding itself unable to defeat the little straggling army of Parnell through recognized parliamentary methods, put an end to the struggle after eleven days by mobbing the parliament. Force in Ireland—force in parliament—why not? The Coercion bill was passed and the lord lieutenant was authorized to arrest any persons he reasonably suspected and, without trial, to throw them into prison and hold them there for any period up to September thirtieth, 1882. This was in the England of the latter days of the nineteenth century!

The merry work immediately began in Ireland and hundreds were swept into prison—but the fight went on, the agitators thundered from the platforms, the island seethed with infuriated tenants, and nothing

was accomplished except to demonstrate the futility of the attempt to subdue the country. And then Gladstone saw the light.

The prime minister now understood that the Land Act of 1870 did not amount to the paper it was written on as far as satisfying the people and meeting the situation went. He realized, as the prisons filled without the abatement of the agitation, that coercion without remedial legislation would not avail. He awoke to a realization of his duty. The Land League, as he admitted twenty years later, tore the scales from his eyes and he beheld Ireland for the first time. In April, 1881, he amazed the country by bringing in a measure of land reform so sweeping in its nature as to amount to revolution. It practically swept away the power of the landlords. In a large degree it met the Irish demands.

And Parnell—how did he meet the concession?

The Gladstone conversion brought Parnell face to face with one of the most critical moments of his career, where a false step would have meant ultimate ruination, and the natural step would have been the false one. To have eagerly accepted the bill would have weakened him in his greater fight for Home Rule and would have hopelessly compromised him with the Fenian element of his following and with his American supporters. To have rejected it utterly would have been worse than criminal. Some of the members of the Irish party spoke in favor of the measure. The enemies of Parnell began to whisper it about that he, too, would gladly accept it. No one, not even his own party, knew precisely what Parnell would do, but his

followers assumed, of course, that he would give it a tacit support. As the time for the second reading approached Parnell called a conference of the Irish party to determine upon its attitude toward the bill. The members were all present and in their seats when the leader reached the conference room, and in his characteristically cold and mystic manner walked to the front of the room and took the chair.

"Gentlemen," he began, "I don't know what your view of this question is. I am against voting on the second reading of the bill. We have not considered it carefully. We must not make ourselves responsible for it. Of course, I do not want to force my views upon anybody, but I feel so strongly upon the subject that if a majority of the party differ from me I shall resign at once."

Thus Parnell had his way, the party harmony was preserved, the Fenians were satisfied and the Home Rulers scored a triumph without compromising the greater cause. When the bill passed on second reading Parnell and thirty-five of his followers walked out—refusing to vote. Whenever the bill or any part of it was in danger Parnell threw his thirty-five into the balance and saved the day. When the final vote was taken he walked out—but the bill passed. This measure took from the landlords the power to increase rents arbitrarily, established tribunals for the fixing of rents and multiplied the facilities for creating a peasant proprietary. It was the first great Irish service ever rendered by Gladstone.

It soon developed, however, that Parnell had seen clearer and further than his followers, for the accept-

ance of the Land act, even in the manner and to the degree in which it was accepted by the Irish party, created the utmost distrust in America and aroused the indignation of Patrick Ford, whose services to the parliamentary party were of inestimable value. This defection determined the course of Parnell—he proposed that his party should give public evidence of its suspicions of the law, and this was done by advising the tenants not to rush precipitately into the law courts with their rent difficulties. In September, 1881, the Land League, in convention assembled in Dublin, took the new Land act under consideration, and Parnell proposed that instead of permitting the tenants to rush indiscriminately into the courts the league should select certain cases for test purposes. This, according to O'Brien, was done to conciliate Ford. By selecting cases other than those notoriously cruel the idea was held out to the editor of *The Irish World* that the determination of these test cases would sufficiently demonstrate the shallowness of the measure.

This plan of campaign, which was adopted by the league, led to the most bitter and extravagant attacks upon Parnell by the English papers of every political persuasion—which was precisely what Parnell wanted. The semi-acceptance of the law by the Irish party had rather tended to weaken Parnell with the radicals; the English denunciations of the leader drew them back. It was left to Gladstone to add anything that the English press had omitted, and in a speech at Leeds the prime minister denounced the Irish leader with a bitterness seldom expressed by that great statesman. This, too, was playing into the hands of Parnell, and

he hastened to follow up his advantage with a counter-attack or reply delivered at Wexford on October ninth, 1881. In this speech he said:

"You have gained something for your exertions during the last twelve months; but I am here to-day to tell you that you have gained but a fraction of that to which you are entitled. And the Irishman who thinks that he can now throw away his arms, just as Grattan disbanded the Irish Volunteers in 1782, will find to his sorrow and destruction when too late that he has placed himself in the power of the perfidious and cruel and relentless English enemy. . . . It is a good sign that the masquerading knight (Gladstone), this pretending champion of the rights of every other nation, should be obliged to throw off the mask to-day and stand revealed as the man who, by his own utterances, is prepared to carry fire and sword into your homesteads unless you humbly abase yourselves before him and before the landlords of the country. But I have forgotten. I said that he maligned everybody. Oh, no. He has a good word for one or two people. He says that the late Isaac Butt was a most estimable man and a true patriot. When we in Ireland were following Isaac Butt into the lobbies endeavoring to obtain the very act which William Ewart Gladstone, having stolen the idea from Isaac Butt, passed last session, William Ewart Gladstone and his ex-government officials were following Sir Starafford Northcote and Benjamin Disraeli into the other lobby. No man is great in Ireland until he is dead and unable to do anything more for his country. In the opinion of an English statesman no man is good in Ireland until he is dead and buried and unable to strike a blow for Ireland. Perhaps the day may come when I may get a good word from an English statesman as being a moderate man, after I am dead and buried. When people talk of public plunder they should ask themselves who were the first plunderers in Ireland. The land of Ireland has been confiscated three times over by the men whose descendants

Mr. Gladstone is supporting in the enjoyment of the fruits of their plunder by his bayonets and his buckshot. And when we are spoken to about plunder we are entitled to ask who were the first and biggest plunderers. This doctrine of public plunder is only a question of degree.

"In one last despairing wail Mr. Gladstone says, 'And the government is expected to preserve peace with no moral force behind it.' The government has no moral force behind them in Ireland; the whole Irish people are against them. They have to depend for their support upon a self-interested and a very small minority of the people of the country, and therefore they have no moral force behind them, and Mr. Gladstone, in those few short words, admits that English government has failed in Ireland.

"He admits the contention that Grattan and the Volunteers of 1782 fought for; he admits the contention that the men of '98 died for; he admits the contention that O'Connell argued for; he admits the contention that the men of '48 staked their all for; he admits the contention that the men of '67, after a long period of depression and apparent death of national life in Ireland, cheerfully faced the dungeons and the horrors of penal servitude for; and he admits the contention that to-day you, in your overpowering multitudes, have established and, please God, will bring to a successful issue—namely, that England's mission in Ireland has been a failure, and that Irishmen have established their right to govern Ireland by laws made by themselves on Irish soil. I say it is not within Mr. Gladstone's power to trample on the aspirations and rights of the Irish nation with no moral force behind him. . . . These are very brave words that he uses, but it strikes me that they have a ring about them like the whistle of a schoolboy on his way through a churchyard at night—to keep up his courage. He would have you believe that he is not afraid of you because he has disarmed you, because he has attempted to disorganize you, because he knows that the Irish na-

tion is to-day disarmed as far as physical weapons are concerned. But he does not hold this kind of language with the Boers. At the beginning of this session he said something of this kind about the Boers. He said that he was going to put them down, and as soon as he discovered that they were able to shoot straighter than his own soldiers he allowed these few men to put him and his government down. I trust as a result of this great movement we shall see that, just as Gladstone by the act of 1881 has eaten all his own words, has departed from all his formerly declared principles, now we shall see that these brave words of the English prime minister will be scattered like chaff before the united and advancing determination of the Irish people to regain for themselves their lost land and their legislative independence."

It was inevitable that such a speech, following close upon that of the prime minister and making the issue plain between the government and Parnell as to which of the two should dominate Ireland, should have a tremendous effect. It was a defiance and a challenge to battle. It had to be accepted or the government was lost. It made it almost a matter of political necessity for the government to proceed against the Irish leader —and this Parnell knew, upon this he had thought. It was in the days when threatening letters were being sent to landlords in Ireland signed "Captain Moonlight." On the evening of the delivery of his Wexford speech Parnell and some of his followers dined together and the followers, fearing and more than half expecting that Parnell's arrest would follow, turned to him with a question:

"Suppose they arrest you, Mr. Parnell; have you any instructions to give us? Who will take your place?"

The leader was in the act of lifting a glass of wine to his lips. Before replying he held the wine between himself and the light as though enjoying the color and then, just as he was about to place it to his lips, he answered with a smile:

"Ah, if I am arrested 'Captain Moonlight' will take my place."

Three days after the Wexford speech the cabinet met in London and determined upon the arrest of Parnell.

The news of the arrest spread rapidly. In England it is said to have been received with the same show of enthusiasm with which the report of an English military victory might have been acclaimed. In Ireland the country went temporarily mad. The shops were closed in towns and villages as for a funeral. In the city of Dublin there was much rioting and the police were forced to club the disturbers into submission. In England Parnell was hated as no man has been hated before or since. In Ireland he became an idol. The Irish fight instantly fell into the hands of the extremists. The strong restraining hand was withdrawn. The reign of terror followed. And Parnell was succeeded by Captain Moonlight!

V

While England's distinguished prisoner, comfortably situated in Kilmainham, was regaling himself with chess the conditions in Ireland, no longer chargeable to him, grew rapidly worse. The most frightful outrages were committed, increasing in number and enormity. The country was bordering on a state of anarchy. The officials of the Castle were helpless to

combat crime. In sheer desperation Lord Cowper and Forster urgently advocated the passage of more stringent laws, only to find that the government in England was meditating compromise with its arch-enemy in Kilmainham prison.

The situation was unique in that both Gladstone and Parnell, but recently at each other's throats, found it to their mutual interest to negotiate some sort of a treaty of peace. The Irish leader noted with alarm the rapidity with which the organized opposition to English rule was degenerating into a state of futile anarchy, and was anxious to get out for the purpose of stemming the tide of lawlessness and restraining the extremists. The English prime minister noticed that the withdrawal of Parnell from active domination of the land movement had resulted in all but converting a constitutional agitation into an incendiary rebellion impossible to subdue without the shedding of much blood and the further embittering of the Irish people. Parnell needed Gladstone to get out; Gladstone needed Parnell to slow up the land movement. Thus the situation was auspicious for negotiations. Within a short time these negotiations were in progress through the offices of Chamberlain, Captain O'Shea and Justin McCarthy. The result was an understanding, if not a compact, as has been denied, to the effect that the government agreed to pass an Arrears act to provide for such of the tenants as were unable to pay their rent, and Parnell agreed to slow up the agitation which had become a nightmare to the ministry. With this distinct understanding, treaty, compact or what not, Parnell walked out of Kilmainham prison—a free man.

In entering into this agreement Parnell accomplished more, perhaps, than Gladstone anticipated—he divided the English opposition or government against itself. Forster and Cowper, feeling themselves repudiated through the treaty with their arch-enemy, instantly resigned and the former, in explaining his resignation to the house of commons, hinted rather broadly at a bargain between the prime minister and Parnell—then an unpardonable offense according to English ethics. It was while Forster was on his feet and in the midst of his denunciation of Parnell that the Irish leader entered the house, fresh from Kilmainham. He was accorded a magnificent ovation, the enthusiasm being shared by a large portion of the English members. It was a happy hour for the leader of the Irish party. The policy through which England had long ruled Ireland was by dividing the Irish against themselves. The situation was now reversed. When Forster sat down Gladstone rose to defend the action of Parnell and himself—and the remarkable spectacle was presented of an English prime minister defending an Irish leader against the attack of a leading member of his own party. At the conclusion of Gladstone's speech Parnell, cold, calm, dignified, concise, made a brief speech to the effect that in the event of the passage of an Arrears act his people would effect material changes in the lamentable conditions in Ireland.

But alas! there was always a Nemesis on the trail of Charles Stewart Parnell and it always struck on the eve of a great triumph!

Hardly had the scene just described been enacted in the house of commons when a tragedy that sent a thrill of horror through the civilized world was en-

acted in Dublin. The government had sent Earl Spencer to Ireland as lord lieutenant to succeed Cowper, and the popular Lord Cavendish was sent as chief secretary to succeed the impossible Forster. Both officials were exceedingly popular and both were men of unusually liberal leanings. This was especially true of Lord Cavendish, who was looked upon as an exceptionally sympathetic critic of Irish affairs. Among the leaders of the Irish party he was as popular as it was possible for an English official to be. On the very day the new officials made their state entrance into Dublin Lord Cavendish, while walking in company with Burke, an under-secretary, through Phœnix Park, was set upon by a number of ruffians and murdered.

The crime sent a thrill of horror all over the world. Great as was the indignation in England, it could not have been so great as in Ireland, which was destined to pay the penalty of the crime. The news of the crime converted Parnell, the cold, calm and collected man, into a madman for a moment. The blow fell upon him with crushing effect. For a moment he completely lost his customary composure, and like a wild man he rushed to the Westminster Palace hotel and into the room of Davitt, where he threw himself into a chair with the declaration of his determination to retire immediately from public life. "How can I carry on a public agitation if I am to be stabbed in the back in this way?" he exclaimed in a voice broken with emotion. Notwithstanding the earnest efforts of his friends to dissuade him, he sat down and penned a note to Gladstone which was delivered to the prime minister at the breakfast table, asking his advice as

to the propriety of his withdrawal from public affairs.

It is to the infinite credit of the prime minister that he strongly advised against such a course on the ground that such action would do more harm than good. Upon the receipt of Gladstone's reply Parnell prepared a manifesto which was signed by Dillon, Davitt and himself on behalf of the Irish party, bitterly denouncing the crime; and when the house met Parnell, pale and careworn like a sick man, rose in his place and in the midst of an ominous and significant silence condemned the crime and declared it to be a deadly blow at the Irish party.

This miserable crime broke in sadly upon the peaceful plans contemplated in the treaty of Kilmainham. It made almost inevitable a recurrence to coercion in Ireland and, while Parnell fought the proposition, he fought hopelessly handicapped under the weight of the Phœnix Park murders. Indeed, his biographer tells us that he scarcely blamed Gladstone for his course. It must be recorded, however, to the very great honor of the prime minister, that he proceeded without delay in carrying out his part of the Kilmainham agreement, and an Arrears bill was presented in practically the identical form in which Parnell had conceived it. This bill provided that the tenant should pay the rent for the year 1881 and that that of arrears should be paid jointly by tenant and government, provided the tenant should be able to satisfy a legal tribunal of his inability to pay the whole. This bill was immediately enacted and Gladstone's part of the program was completed. Parnell exerted all the influence he possessed to live up to his part of the plan, and while he did succeed in slowing down the agitation, the reversion of the

government to coercive measures in Ireland placed him at a painful disadvantage.

The one impressive feature of this period, however, is the fact that he walked out of Kilmainham prison with an Irish concession in his hand.

VI

It soon developed that the understanding between Parnell and Gladstone was a gentleman's agreement rather than an alliance. True to his policy the Irish leader accepted the Arrears act as a concession to necessity and of comparatively small moment, and almost immediately he renewed his activities with increased earnestness. That his hatred and contempt for England had not abated one whit was manifested in a striking episode in the house of commons about this time. The one man who never forgave Parnell for his treaty with Gladstone was Forster, and we shall find him from time to time recurring to his attacks upon the Irish leader—attacks that were virulent, vicious, unscrupulous, dishonest. The Phœnix Park murders gave him an early opportunity to resume his fight on Parnell, and in a bitter attack upon the character of his enemy he attempted to trace all the crimes that had been committed in Ireland to his door. During the delivery of the speech, which was inflammatory and provocative, Parnell sat calmly facing Forster with an expression of scorn which sometimes took the form of a sneer upon his pale face. Only once did he manifest the slightest feeling.

"It is not that he himself directly planned or perpetrated outrages," said Forster, "but that he either connived at them or when warned—"

"It is a lie," shouted Parnell.

That was all. The Irish leader was instantly a mask again—cold, imperturbable, scornful. It was the expectation that Parnell would reply the moment Forster resumed his seat. This idea, however, does not appear to have entered into Parnell's plans. He made no motion to rise. His friends, astonished, gathered about him, urging him to defend himself, but he refused until the importunities of his lieutenants became so insistent that he agreed. On the day announced for the reply the house was packed. Among the celebrities in the galleries was the Prince of Wales. Parnell sat cold and calm and indifferent among his followers, apparently oblivious to the tenseness of the feeling of the house. At length he rose, and his first sentence was an expression of profound contempt for the public opinion of England:

"I have been accustomed during my political life," he began, "to rely upon the opinion of those whom I have desired to help, and with whose aid I have worked for the cause of prosperity and freedom in Ireland, and the utmost I desire to do in the very few words I shall address to the house is to make my position clear to the Irish people at home and abroad."

In the words that followed he treated Forster with open contempt, and did not so much as notice the vicious charges the former secretary had made against him. This had the effect of arousing the utmost indignation in England and of awakening the liveliest enthusiasm among the Irish people, who gloried in a leader who had the audacity to stand in the English house of commons and publicly declare that the good

opinion of the English people was not worth the cultivation.

Meanwhile the conditions in Ireland had not improved under Earl Spencer, owing in part, perhaps, to the return to coercion which followed the Phœnix Park murders, and the country was saturated with sedition. The lord lieutenant himself had become so unpopular with the masses that he only ventured into the streets under the protection of an armed escort. The antipathy of the Irish people to Gladstone was so pronounced that his appointee in Dublin was greeted with cries of "Down with Gladstone" as he rode through the city. With his finger then as always on the public pulse, Parnell foresaw that the prime minister was doomed, and he determined to hasten his downfall and precipitate a general election. This anxiety to try conclusions at the polls was born of the conviction that the newly established household suffrage which increased the voting strength of Ireland by half a million votes would insure the Irish party a following of from eighty to ninety members who would hold the balance of power as between the English parties.

As a preliminary step Parnell was quietly studying the political chessboard and fixing his estimates of men. It appears that at this period he was particularly interested in three of the English leaders. Of the three he was partial personally to Lord Randolph Churchill. It is hardly probable that Parnell ever really loved any Englishman, but it is said that he entertained a kindlier feeling for the brilliant young Tory leader than for any other man in public life. The clever orator and game fighter appealed to him strongly and he loved to lounge in the smoking room with Lord Randolph to enjoy his witticisms and quaint

biting characterizations. He felt, too, that Churchill's generous and liberal nature and friendly attitude toward the Irish people gave promise of future services. As to his attitude toward Home Rule he knew little or nothing, but he looked upon the Tory iconoclast as the most likely of the English statesmen to subscribe to an independent parliament for Ireland. He doubted his capacity to carry the Tory party with him even in the event of his conversion to the cause, but he felt that Lord Randolph with his marvelous resourcefulness could at least create enough sentiment within that party to give serious concern to the liberals.

Another English statesman who was under Parnell's observation at this time was Joe Chamberlain, the erratic and brilliant young liberal for whom he entertained that liking which is born of admiration. His analysis of Chamberlain's predilections led him to the conclusion that the member for Birmingham would concede everything to Ireland short of Home Rule, and for that reason he decided to cultivate friendly relations with him while holding him at a distance.

The third of the trio, of course, was Gladstone. It appears on the evidence of his contemporaries that Parnell entertained a secret dislike for the liberal leader, but that he was thoroughly appreciative of his majestic genius. O'Brien in his biography says that "man for man he would rather have had Gladstone on his side than any man in England." He likewise felt that Gladstone would carry more strength in Ireland than any of the other English politicians.

And now for Parnell's game—what was it?

Parnell knew, of course, that the three politicians mentioned were all hungry for office and for power,

and he proposed to muster sufficient numerical strength in the Irish party to make it impossible for any of them to reach power without dealing directly with him. According to O'Brien, his plan was to threaten Chamberlain with Churchill and both with Gladstone by making it clear that his strength would go to the one who promised the most to Ireland. As a preliminary he proposed to give a practical demonstration of his power by driving Gladstone from office and compelling a general election. In the meanwhile he had an understanding with Lord Randolph Churchill—an understanding which has been subjected to many interpretations. In his brilliant biography of his father, Winston Churchill rather appears to resent the idea that there was anything like a compact between him and the Irish leader, but Lord Rosebery, in his clever monograph on Lord Randolph, is equally convinced that there was a distinct understanding. It seems reasonable to assume that Parnell did know that in the event the liberals should be thrown out and the Tories returned to office there would be no renewal of the Crimes act in the event Churchill made one of the new government—an event that was practically inevitable.

Thus did Parnell lay his plans. The opportunity for their consummation came about the middle of May, 1885, when Gladstone announced his determination to renew the Crimes act. The bill was to be presented on June tenth. The Irish leader carefully waited for an auspicious opportunity to spring upon the government, and this was presented on June eighth on the second reading of the budget. An amendment was offered by a Tory leader condemning the proposed in-

crease of the duties on beer and spirits; the entire strength of the Irish party was thrown by Parnell in favor of the amendment, and the government was defeated. The significance of the overthrow of the government could not have been lost on Gladstone when he listened to the lusty shouts of the Irish members, "Remember coercion." The first part of Parnell's program had been followed to a successful conclusion.

Within a month the Tories were in office with Lord Salisbury as prime minister, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach as chancellor of the exchequer, Lord Churchill as secretary of state for India and the Earl of Carnarvon as lord lieutenant for Ireland. It was not necessary for Parnell to remind the Tory government of its obligations to the Irish party, for the liberals attended to that. John Morley, commenting upon the situation at the time, said: "As for the new government, sharp critics—and some of the sharpest are to be found on their own benches—do not shrink from declaring that they come into power as Mr. Parnell's lieutenants. His vote has installed, it can displace them; it has its price and the price will be paid. In the whole transaction the Irish not only count, they count almost for everything."

Nor were the Tories unmindful of their obligation. They refused to renew the Crimes act in Ireland. Lord Carnarvon publicly announced his determination to rule in Ireland by the ordinary law. When Parnell asked for an inquiry into the trials of the Maamtrasna murderers and the liberals, interpreting the demand as a reflection upon the administration of the Earl Spencer, set up a cry of protest, the Tories granted the request. The Tories became more liberal than the lib-

erals. All the leaders of the party in power assumed the most cordial attitude toward Parnell and this was especially true of Lord Churchill, who was probably the most sincere of the lot. Taking advantage of his brief summer, Parnell demanded a new Land bill and one was promptly passed empowering the state to advance a part or the whole of the purchase money to tenants who had agreed with their landlords to buy their holdings and allowing forty-nine years for repayment at four per cent. interest.

Then came the famous Carnarvon incident on the eve of the elections.

In the elections which followed the dissolution of parliament Parnell entered the campaign with but one plank in his platform, and that declaring for Home Rule. He delivered his keynote at a meeting in Dublin in the latter part of August when he said:

"I say that each and all of us have only looked upon the acts—the legislative enactments which we have been able to wring from an unwilling parliament—as means toward an end; that we would have at any time, in the hours of our deepest depression and greatest discouragement, spurned and rejected any measure, however tempting and however apparently for the benefit of our people, if we had been able to detect that behind it lurked any danger to the legislative independence of our land. . . . It is admitted by all parties that you have brought the question of Irish legislative independence to the point of solution. It is not now a question of self-government for Ireland; it is only a question as to how much of self-government they will be able to cheat us out of. It is not now a question as to whether the Irish people shall decide their own destinies and their own future, but it is a question with—I was going to say our English masters, but we can not call them masters in Ireland—

it is a question with them as to how far the day, that they consider the evil day, shall be deferred. You are therefore entitled to say that so far you have done well, you have almost done miraculously well, and we hand to our successors an unsullied flag, a battle more than half won, and a brilliant history. . . . I hope it may not be necessary for us in the new parliament to devote our attention to subsidiary measures, and that it may be possible for us to have a program and a platform with only one plank—national independence."

This bold pronouncement coming so soon after Parnell's practical demonstration of the power of the Irish party over English governments created a feeling of mingled indignation and alarm in England, and a tremendous howl went up from the English press declaring the program announced to be impossible, ridiculous. Lord Hartington, a liberal leader, formally replied to the effect that however much English parties might be divided on other propositions they were united in their opposition to the Parnell program. This supercilious statement was instantly met by the Irish leader in a banquet speech in Dublin in early September when he said:

"I believe that if it be sought to make it impossible for our country to obtain the right to administer her own affairs, we shall make all other things impossible for those who strive to bring that about. And who is it that tells us that these things are impossible? It was the same man who said that local government for Ireland was impossible without impossible declarations on our part. These statements came from the lips that told us that the concession of equal electoral privileges to Ireland with those in England would be madness; and we see that what was considered madness in the eyes of the man who now tells us that Ireland's right to self-

government is an impossibility, has been now conceded without opposition, and that the local self-government which was then also denied to us from the same source is now offered to us by the same person, with the humble entreaty that we take it in order that we may educate ourselves for better things and for further powers. . . . Well, gentlemen, I am not much given to boasting, and I should be very unwilling to assume for myself the rôle of prophet; but I am obliged, I confess, to-night to give you my candid opinion, and it is this—that if they have not succeeded in squelching us during the last five years, they are not likely to do so during the next five years unless they brace themselves up to adopt one of two alternatives, by the adoption of either one of which we should ultimately win, and perhaps win a larger and heavier stake than we otherwise should. They will either have to grant to Ireland the complete right to rule herself, or they will have to take away from us the share —the sham share—in the English constitutional system which they extended to us at the union, and govern us as a crown colony."

In declarations such as this Parnell forced the English parties to take cognizance during the campaign of the existence of an Irish question and an Irish party. Neither party stood pledged to Home Rule. Both parties feared the effect of the united Irish opposition. The leaders of all parties entered upon a furious flirtation with Parnell—a flirtation not intended seriously. Some of the leaders, such as Churchill, maintained absolute silence on the subject. Chamberlain spoke out plainly against Parnell's program. John Morley deftly touched upon the subject and held forth a shadowy suggestion of some settlement such as in Canada. Lord Salisbury, in his speeches, rather stunned his followers—not by accepting the Parnell plan, for he did not, but by the con-

servative and half timid nature of his opposition. Meanwhile Gladstone—greatest politician of them all —was diplomatically disseminating the idea that he was seriously considering the question of Home Rule and was sympathetically inclined. In early November he delivered a queer pronouncement at Edinburgh in a speech of two parts with two meanings, one hinting unmistakably at Home Rule, the other indicating opposition. This was instantly met by Parnell, who ignored the second portion of the speech, grasped the first part holding forth hope and tried to persuade the old man of Hawarden to go further. To this Gladstone replied, like a clever flirt, with some gentle banter and upon this Parnell determined to throw his support to the Tories.

"Ireland," he said, "has been knocking at the English door long enough with kid gloves. I tell the English people to beware and to be wise in time. Ireland will soon throw off the kid gloves, and she will knock with the mailed hand."

Then followed a manifesto to the voters bitterly denouncing the liberals for their misgovernment of Ireland. This greatly surprised and hurt Gladstone, and Salisbury, the Tory leader, was seriously concerned lest the manifesto in the interest of his party prove disadvantageous in the English constituencies. Such was the ludicrous character of the campaign. Feeling a profound contempt for both of the English parties, Parnell threw himself with all his power into the campaign in Ireland and when the result was announced it was found that he had swept Ireland from end to end, had captured half of Ulster and would

enter the house of commons with eighty-six followers at his back. The result in England gave the liberals three hundred and thirty-three, the conservatives two hundred and fifty-one—which meant that Parnell by throwing his eighty-six votes into the conservative camp would give Salisbury a majority of four, and that by an alliance with the liberals Gladstone would be able to accomplish anything within reason with a lead of one hundred and sixty-nine. Thus Parnell was the one man who emerged from the elections of 1885 in the light of a victor, for he held the balance of power and was absolute master of the situation.

VII

From the moment the result of the election was known Parnell lost no time in serving notice that he proposed to use his balance of power relentlessly to the end that no government would be permitted to dispose of any public business which did not contemplate an immediate consideration of the question of Home Rule. Lord Salisbury, the prime minister, realizing his inability to carry his party with him on the proposition, lost all interest in the erstwhile Irish alliance, although it appears that Lord Randolph Churchill did all he could within the cabinet to preserve the relations of the two parties. It was after his failure that he made the characteristically cynical remark ascribed to him by T. P. O'Connor in *The Great Irish Struggle,* "I have done my best for you and have failed; and now, of course, I shall do my best against you." The situation presented an entirely different aspect to Gladstone, who entered into negotiations with Parnell with

a view to a workable alliance looking toward the concession of the Irish contention. The Irish leader gave the liberal leader to understand that with an Irish parliament and an Irish executive conceded he would not quarrel with the prospective liberal government regarding whether there should be one or two chambers in the Dublin parliament, or whether there should or should not be an Irish representation at Westminster. With this understanding Gladstone now inspired a story in the press to the effect that he was prepared to take up the question of Home Rule. Such was the state of the parties at the time parliament convened in January, 1886. Quite soon after the meeting of parliament Gladstone submitted his propositions to Parnell in written form through a third person, who was instructed to read the proposals to the Irish leader but to retain possession of the memorandum. It was characteristic of Parnell that he should have coolly taken the paper from the hands of the messenger and have put it in his pocket with the remark that he would prepare a reply without delay. The following day Parnell notified the liberal leader of his acceptance of the general propositions submitted to his consideration. All this transpired, of course, with the Tory government still holding on by its eyebrows.

The alliance between Gladstone and Parnell, however, spelt the downfall of the Salisbury ministry and when, in the latter part of January, Lord Churchill presented a bill for the suppression of the Land League the Irish party was left free to strike, and the blow fell within a few days and Gladstone returned to power with the Irish party at his back.

During the period when the Home-Rule bill of 1886

was in preparation Parnell was in close and constant communication with Morley, who has given us, in his biography of Gladstone, many intensely interesting side-lights upon the activities and characteristics of the Irish leader. He impressed Morley, one of the most erudite and brilliant of modern English statesmen, with his frankness, patience, pertinacity, accuracy and insight. "Of constructive faculty he never showed a trace," says Morley. "He was a man of temperament, of will, of authority, of power; not of ideas or ideals, or knowledge, or political maxims, or even of the practical reason in any of its higher senses, as Hamilton, Madison and Jefferson had practical reason. But he knew what he wanted."

And therein consisted his greatness in the negotiations of '86—he knew precisely what he wanted. He was willing to agree to a temporary exclusion of Irish representation at Westminster. He was willing to consent to any arrangement that might be submitted relative to the constitution of the two houses of an Irish parliament, although he had a partiality for a single chamber. His principal fight seems to have centered in an effort to exact the best possible financial arrangements for his country. Upon this point he was insistent. Morley relates the story of one evening when he spent two hours with Parnell wrestling with the question of taxes and customs, and another hour and a half after Gladstone had been summoned. When the prime minister excused himself at midnight he muttered under his breath to Morley, who accompanied him to the door, "Very clever, very clever." Returning to Parnell, the conference continued—Parnell polite, imperturbable, insistent, tireless.

At length the bill was made acceptable and presented. In the midst of the utmost excitement, in the presence of the most distinguished company, Gladstone made the first of his majestic speeches on the subject which will do more to preserve his fame than any other matter with which his career is associated. While the Irish members were seething with enthusiasm the leader of the Irish party sat in their midst, pale, cold, tranquil—but watchful, always watchful.

Meanwhile the enemies of Home Rule multiplied their activities. The bigots of Ulster began to organize their little rebellion. The bigots of England began to mutter their hypocritical prayers for protection against the Pope. The milk-and-water liberals commenced to waver and fall out of line before the attacks of the enemy. The one phase of the situation, however, injected by Gladstone, which occasioned the greatest concern in all quarters and did the greatest damage to the cause was that which hinged upon the government's Land bill, which was tied to and made a part of the Home-Rule bill. This was intended to pave the way for a peasant proprietary and provided for a twenty-year purchase of land by the state and the sale of the land to the tenants—the state also to advance the purchase money and give the tenants forty-nine years to pay it back. During this time a receiver-general was to be appointed to receive the rents and revenues. No one appeared to be wholly satisfied with the proposed plan. The Irish, who accepted it as a matter of policy, were dissatisfied with the receiver-general. The liberals did not like the heavy public expenditure entailed and the landlords were naturally bitterly antagonistic. The uprising

against the Land bill finally became so ominous that Gladstone practically agreed to throw it over, and then centered his efforts on mustering a majority on the second reading of the Home-Rule measure. In the meanwhile, Chamberlain, who probably entered the cabinet for the purpose of leaving his leader in the lurch, had resigned, and some of the liberal aristocrats were in open revolt, appearing at public meetings on the same platform with Salisbury. The most damaging defection, however, was that of the venerable John Bright, who cast a shadow on his renown by turning his back upon the race he had so brilliantly served in former years at the very moment when the weight of his genius was needed most. But Gladstone fought on like a tiger—a magnificent, compelling figure to the last.

It was not until the last night of the debate that Parnell participated in the discussion. At that time the defeat of the measure was almost a foregone conclusion. Under the depressing atmosphere of impending defeat, he spoke with more than his accustomed vigor:

"During the last five years I know, Sir, that there have been very severe and drastic coercion bills, but it will require an even severer and more drastic coercion now. You will require all that you have had during the last five years and more besides. What, Sir, has that coercion been? You have had, Sir, during those last five years—I don't say this to inflame passion—you have had during those five years the suspension of the Habeas Corpus act; you have had one thousand of your fellow Irish subjects held in prison without specific charge, many of them for long periods of time, some of them for twenty months without trial, and without any intention

of placing them upon trial; you have had the Arms act; you have had the suspension of trial by jury—all during the last five years. You have authorized your police to enter the domicile of a citizen, of your fellow subject in Ireland, at any hour of the day or night, and search any part of this domicile, even the beds of the women, without warrant. You have fined the innocent for offenses committed by the guilty, you have taken power to expel aliens from the country, you have revived the curfew law and the blood money of your Norman conquerors, you have gagged the press and seized and suppressed newspapers, you have manufactured new crimes and offenses, and applied fresh penalties unknown to your law for these crimes and offenses. All this you have done for five years—and much more you will have to do again."

It was this speech which Morley pronounces "the most masterly that ever fell from him." But it was of no avail. Gladstone closed the debate for the ministry in one of his most powerful and eloquent orations, but it availed nothing. It was reason bumping its head against the inanimate brick wall of bigotry. The vote was taken and the government was defeated by three hundred and forty-three to three hundred and thirteen —ninety-three liberal traitors having turned the trick.

The fall of the liberal ministry was followed by a dissolution and an appeal to the country which will go down in history as one of the most inspiring and brilliant and spectacular in the history of English politics because of the magnificent orations with which Gladstone, the giant, bombarded the castle of the bigots. Thus had a wonderful political revolution been wrought through the far-seeing sagacity and diplomacy of Parnell. Hardly more than a year before the liberals had been a unit in their fight upon the pro-

gram of Parnell—and now Parnell sat back and contemplated the delectable spectacle of Gladstone himself fighting the Irish battles on the English hustings with a brilliant fury that amazed and captivated the world. The result of the elections gave the Tories a majority of one hundred and eighteen—but considering the enormous liberal defection, the English bigotry, the opposition of the opulent landlords, all in active cooperation with the Tories, the liberal defeat of 1886 was scarcely less than a triumph.

Lord Salisbury returned to office only to be met by Parnell on the threshold of the new parliament with a Land bill proposing the abatement of rents fixed before 1885 provided the tenants were unable to pay the full amount and were prepared to pay half. Reenforced now by Gladstonian support he spoke a haughty language, warning the government that the rejection of the bill would be followed by another period of turmoil in Ireland. The bill was rejected—and turmoil resulted. Another brutal coercion act was passed. A veritable state of war characterized the green isle. Public meetings were suppressed. Great districts were proclaimed and reduced to a condition of absolute subjugation. In the trials that resulted, the government again resorted to the old barbaric trick of packing the juries. The leaders of the people were ruthlessly and without cause thrown into prison. The number of evictions with their attending suffering, multiplied. Ireland was ruled by brute force—and the brutes who ruled were the British Tories.

And all the while Gladstone, true leader that he was, devoted himself to educating the public opinion of England. The alliance between Gladstone and Parnell,

between the liberals and the Irish, was open and above board. So remarkable had been the change wrought in the relations of parties through the diplomacy of Parnell that the liberals sent up the Macedonian cry to the Irish parliamentarians to come over and help out on the English hustings. The Irish leader actually shared the popularity of Gladstone with the English democracy and the liberal party, and when he appeared, after much importunity at a liberal meeting at St. James' hall, with John Morley in the chair, the audience was fairly intoxicated by its enthusiasm. Cold, calm, concise, resorting to none of the rhetorical tricks of the hustings, dignified, and apparently indifferent to English applause, his very aloofness inflamed his English hearers.

And during this period Parnell again demonstrated his political sagacity. Never in his career did he speak with such moderation and conservatism. He stood out almost in the light of an Irish reactionary. In this he had a motive. He knew that he held Ireland in the hollow of his hand. He realized that the fight had to be won with the English voters. He felt that the strong language of an Irishman might have the effect of compromising the Irish cause in England. And in England, an English leader, immensely popular, rarely endowed with genius and eloquence, was putting his whole soul into the fight for Home Rule—pouring forth a veritable flood of passionate protests against the wrongs of Erin and demanding in the name of justice and decency the recognition of the Irish right to Home Rule. With Gladstone fairly shocking his fellow Englishmen with the passionate speeches he was making, Parnell chose to play the

moderate and the conservative. By subordinating himself to Gladstone, he was making the Home-Rule cause, the cause of the most popular political leader in the England from which, alone, Home Rule could be conceded.

VIII

The masterly manner in which Parnell had so directed events as to make it incumbent upon one of the leading English parties to stand sponsor for Home Rule was maddening to the enemies of Ireland. As Gladstone continued with unabated energy his brilliant advocacy of the proposals of Parnell, the Tory element and the aristocratic section of the liberal party were made to understand that the Irish question had been introduced for good into English politics unless something should develop to compromise and discredit the Home-Rule cause. The more unscrupulous of the enemies of this cause commenced to apply their ingenuity and inventive genius to the discovery of some crime traceable to the door of the Irish leader. Thus in 1887 the *London Times,* which has continued unto the present hour to misrepresent the conditions in Ireland and the cause of the Irish people, began the publication of a series of articles under the sensational caption of *Parnellism and Crime.* (These articles were of no importance, being nothing more than the rinsings of the dirty partisan pot—an indiscriminate enumeration of outrages and all ascribed by inuendo and insinuation to the leader of the Irish people.) The *Times* realized the weakness of its case and was extremely anxious for something of a really compromising nature to use against Parnell.

It was about this time that a discredited and rather mediocre Irish journalist, Richard Pigott, reduced to the necessity of living on his wits, took notice of the necessities of the *Times*.

Cunning suggested the forging of Parnell's name to a compromising letter and the selling of the letter to the most dignified and respectable journal, according to English public opinion, in the empire. The letter was prepared and couched in such terms as to create in a reader the positive conviction that the author was in possession of a guilty knowledge of the Phœnix Park murders. To this infamous letter Pigott scribbled the name of Charles Stewart Parnell. It is almost inconceivable that a paper like the *London Times* should have had the temerity to accept and publish such a letter—but the *Times* made it the crowning feature of its exposure of *Parnellism and Crime*. Upon the publication of the forged letter the liberals and Gladstone manifested the keenest concern. It was characteristic of Parnell that he should have considered the *Times* articles with their purchased letter beneath his notice. The nervousness of his liberal allies, however, finally impelled him to pronounce calmly the letter a forgery in a rather indifferent speech in the house of commons. His very moderation of language alarmed his friends in the liberal party, and finally, in a disgusted frame of mind, he demanded the appointment of a select committee of the house to institute a thorough investigation.

During his connection with Irish affairs Parnell had come to know Pigott very well, too well. He had in his possession letters from the forger and he knew something about the financial difficulties and the crimi-

nal capabilities of the journalist. It appears that when Parnell sat down to a critical study of the forged letter he had Pigott in mind as the possible author. Immediately he hit upon the misspelling of the word "hesitancy," which was spelled with an "e" instead of an "a," and he recalled having received a letter from Pigott in which the same word had been employed and the identical mistake had been made. With this and this alone as a clew Pigott was summoned to London and upon his arrival he was enticed to a meeting with the brilliant Henry Labouchere—the wasp of English journalism, and one of the clever iconoclasts and free lances of the commons. Subjected to a rigid cross-examination, Pigott finally made a confession, but on the following day he regained his nerve and refused to repeat his confession to the public and denied ever having made it.

Throughout the long-drawn legal battle Parnell's friends were increasingly alarmed. The leader himself appeared on the surface to be contemptuously indifferent. It was not until Pigott was called to the stand and subjected to a remarkable cross-examination by Sir Charles Russell that the Irish leader began to get his inning. Never perhaps in any court at any time has any witness ever received such a grilling as fell to the lot of the scoundrel at the hands of Russell. Before the almost cruel bombardment of questions the wretched forger gradually weakened, and when he left the stand for the noon recess on the final day of his cross-examination, it was remarked that he would not return. The prediction came true. Pigott made his escape from England. A few days later he made

an admission of his guilt—and a little later the world learned of his suicide. Thus fell, most miserably and shamefully, the case of the *London Times* against Charles Stewart Parnell.

The result was an immediate and tremendous reaction in his favor. The enthusiasm of his friends was boundless. The chagrin of his enemies was deep. The gratitude of the liberals manifested itself in the utmost jubilation. The scene in the house of commons on his first appearance after his triumphant vindication has had few parallels in the history of the parliament. He was late on reaching Westminster and his approach was heralded to the waiting members by the shouting of the multitudes in the streets. His entrance was the signal for an ovation. Almost immediately after entering the house he rose to speak. As he stood there, extremely pale, his handsome features disclosing no emotion, the Irish members began to cheer. Then with a shout they jumped to their feet. The enthusiasm was contagious. The members of the liberal party who had been made to suffer during the progress of the trial, threw aside their dignity and rose to their feet in imitation of the more inflammable Irish. It was a scene never before witnessed in the house of commons—an English party joining in an inspiring tribute to a hated Irish leader. And then the climax of it all came when no less a personage than William Ewart Gladstone stood up and with a beaming face turned in welcoming attitude toward Parnell. His example was enough. Instantly former members of English cabinets were on their feet—and the ovation continued. And all the while Parnell stood, pale

to the lips, but apparently unmoved, declining to bow his thanks to the fickle crowd that had only the day before been ready to join in his crucifixion.

At length the tumult died down, and the members resumed their seats, eager to hear what Parnell would have to say about the damnable conspiracy which had been hatched for his destruction. In a cold even tone, he began to speak—and the house of commons was immeasurably amazed to find him calmly discussing the question before the house and without a single reference to the celebrated trial. At this time Parnell stood upon the very pinnacle of his power and popularity. He was the veritable uncrowned king of Ireland. His battle was being fought in England by the great liberal party, and Gladstone was still thundering his demand for the concession of Irish rights. An election was approaching, and with every prospect of a successful issue. Home Rule loomed large on the horizon. The battle was almost over, the fight was almost won.

And then came the Nemesis—trailing on behind. The greatest moment in Parnell's career before had been the hour of his liberation from prison with an Irish concession in his hand. At that very hour the murderers struck down Lord Cavendish in Phœnix Park. And now after his last and greatest triumph—the Nemesis struck again, and the world was shocked and stunned on learning that Captain O'Shea had sued for divorce and had named as co-respondent Charles Stewart Parnell.

The Irish leader offered no defense, and the divorce was granted.

The political effect was tremendous. The heart-

breaking possibilities instantly appealed to the members of the Irish party, and, three days after the divorce, a meeting of the National League was held in Dublin, and, with John Redmond in the chair, a resolution was passed unanimously to sustain Parnell. In England the effect was quite different. One English politician, Henry Labouchere, took the position that it was none of England's business whom the Irish people selected for their leader—but Labouchere was more French than English in temperament. The English moralists began to move. The relations between the Home-Rule movement and the liberal party were now so intimate that the liberal leaders, whether sympathizing with the hue and cry or not, felt obliged to take cognizance of it. The inevitable decision was reached that they could not afford to carry the load. Gladstone, Morley and William T. Stead, took the position that the continued relations between the liberals and the Irish depended upon the deposition of Parnell from the leadership of the Irish party. It was Gladstone's contention to Justin McCarthy that no other event could save from defeat the liberal party, to whom the Irish people were looking for Home Rule.

Meanwhile the Irish members met in London and reelected their chosen champion to the position of leader. Then followed the publication of Gladstone's letter demanding the retirement of Parnell. This impelled many of the Irish members to the conclusion that perhaps it would be best for their leader to retire at least temporarily from public life. The wonderful battle that was waged among the Irish members at their prolonged conferences has probably never been equaled in its dramatic features. Parnell sat tight.

Instead of retiring under fires he proposed the terms of his withdrawal—that Gladstone would pledge himself in writing in a letter to McCarthy to give the Irish parliament, which seemed assured, control of the police and the land. The refusal of Gladstone to discuss terms let loose the dogs of war. The Irish party was hopelessly split. With an imposing eloquence, John Redmond fought the battle for Parnell. "When we are asked," he said, "to sell our leader to preserve the English alliance, it seems to me that we are bound to inquire what we are getting for the price we are paying." But the question was non-debatable. The differences were irreconcilable. And when at length the impossibility of an agreement was disclosed Justin McCarthy led forty-four seceders from the room, leaving Parnell in possession with the remaining twenty-six. And thus, just on the edge of the Promised Land, the people of Ireland once more turned their faces to the wilderness.

IX

Parnell now determined to fight. He looked upon the English leaders as hypocrites, as he always had. He despised the public opinion of England, as he always had. And now with his leadership disputed he turned again to Ireland to wage his battle for a vindication. The activities of Parnell during the next few months constitute a story of ineffable pathos. "I do not pretend," he said at Dublin, "that I have not moments of trial and temptation, but I do claim that never in thought or deed have I been false to the trust that Irishmen have confided to me." No one could deny

it. If he had transgressed the moral law, he had been true to his people. His fight, however, was a losing fight, albeit he fought with the desperation of despair. Defeated in the bitter election contests at North Kilkenny, Sligo and Carlow, he persevered and pretended to see light where others saw but darkness.

Every Saturday he left London for Ireland where he crowded in as many speeches as possible until Monday night when he resumed his place in the house of commons. Burning the candle at both ends, his slender form grew slighter, his pallor deepened. We have a touching picture of him at this time trying to amuse himself one night in Dublin. After the theater he remembered a little oyster house in Grafton Street to which he had gone years before and here, in the company of a friend, he remained until the early hours of the morning in reminiscent mood. Three weeks before the end, when Justin McCarthy remonstrated with him on account of his ceaseless activity, he replied, with a sad smile, that in his present state of mind he thought the constant traveling and speaking did him good.

In the early autumn of 1891 the health of Parnell was in a precarious state, but he persisted in his fight. In late September, his health hopelessly shattered, he defied the orders of his physician to speak at Creggs, and, notwithstanding great bodily pain, he made there his final appeal to Ireland. He left the platform with the imprint of death upon his face, and retired to his house at Brighton where he was forced to take to his bed. The general public knew little about his physical condition and the fight against him went on with undiminished fury until October seventh when the news

flashed over the wires that Charles Stewart Parnell was dead. The announcement created a sensation in London. There was a momentary hush. The bitter tongues of his enemies were stilled. The greatest friend of Ireland was dead—and Ireland helped to kill him.

On Sunday morning, in October, the steamer *Ireland* pulled in at Kingston, and one forenoon the body of the dead chieftain lay in state in the City Hall in Dublin, and a vast concourse of people followed the hearse to Grasnevin cemetery where, not far from the grave of O'Connell, Parnell was buried.

The years that have gone since Parnell died within sound of the sea have softened the animosities of the year of his death, and the world has almost forgotten, or, if it remembers, it is with pity rather than with hate, the story of the scandal; but the years have served to accentuate the most notable pictures of his marvelous career—the Parnell standing almost alone in the house of commons, torn by turmoil, and forcing a consideration of Irish rights;—the Parnell playing chess at Kilmainham, and from the vantage point of a prison coaxing an important Irish concession from the prime minister of the empire;—the Parnell consolidating Ireland and haughtily giving terms to the supplicating leaders of English parties—this Parnell, the real Parnell, will never die. The path he blazed is the path his people have trod, and ultimately it will be the path to victory.

His was a complex personality. The emotional side of his nature, so carefully concealed from the public which thought him cold and calculating, has been shown us in the reminiscences of his sister, Mrs. Dick-

inson, his brother John Parnell, and Mrs. O'Shea. His amazing superstitions, such as his fear of the color green, his horror of the number thirteen, his tendency to attach a tragic significance to three lighted candles, to the unexplainable falling of any object, or the breaking of glass, are inexplicable. He felt a tender solicitude for the welfare of his tenants. He loved dogs and horses and the beauties of nature. His haughtiness, so often referred to in reproach, was but the manifestation of his shyness of strangers. Beneath the frozen crust was a fiery crater. That this man who had read little, who knew scarcely any history, who was utterly lacking in the poetic qualities of the Celt, and who was as simple as the most humble peasant in his superstitions should have developed into the greatest leader, save one perhaps, of the Irish race is one of the phenomena of history. That he remained an enigma to the English leaders may be assumed from the statement given out by Gladstone after Parnell had passed away at Brighton:

"Parnell was the most remarkable man I ever met. I do not say he was the ablest man; I say the most remarkable man. He was an intellectual phenomenon. He was unlike any one I had ever met. He did things and said things unlike other men. His ascendency over his party was remarkable. There has never been anything like it in my experience in the house of commons."

X

In the extracts from Parnell's speeches which have been used it will be noted that he was not a great

orator in the ordinary acceptation of the term. The fervor of expression, the rhetorical grace and fire, the epigrammatic brilliance, the emotional appeal with which one associates Irish oratory were almost wholly lacking. There was nothing of rhetorical eloquence in his utterances. Nor was there the slightest dramatic effect in his manner of speaking. Of gestures there was comparatively none. His voice was adequate, but not musical and there was no attempt at modulation. And yet he made profound impressions on immense audiences and commanded the most perfect attention ordinarily when he spoke in the house of commons. The secret of his success on the platform and in the house lay in the fact that the hearer knew that behind every word was an idea, and behind every idea was a man. When Richard Lalor Sheil delivered one of his masterful rhetorical masterpieces, full of fight, the people were delighted with the rolling thunder of the sound, and impressed with the artistry of the actor, but Sheil could not have framed a sentence sufficiently fervent to have created half the impression that Parnell could have created by the cold utterance of the simple words, "Keep a firm grip upon your homesteads."

The eloquence of Parnell then was quite similar to that of Napoleon. He was not an orator, as we popularly understand oratory, and yet his short speeches to his soldiers on the verge of battle were infinitely more effective than the most stirring eloquence of Pitt. While Parnell was not an actor he held audiences by the spell of his personality. There was something of fascinating mystery about him that appealed to people. He possessed one advantage on the platform—he was a handsome man of imposing personal appearance.

Gladstone throws a sidelight on his power over the people when he says: "He did things and he said things unlike other men." But John Redmond, in his lecture on *The House of Commons,* gives us the best idea of Parnell, the orator: "He seldom spoke, once he had risen to a commanding position in parliament. When he did speak THE SILENCE THAT CREPT OVER THE HOUSE WAS ABSOLUTELY PAINFUL IN ITS INTENSITY. He had something of that quality which Coleridge ascribed to the *Ancient Mariner.* 'He held them by his glittering eye, they could not choose but hear.' He was no orator in the ordinary acceptation of the term. Indeed he commenced his parliamentary career as a halting speaker, with almost an impediment in his speech. As time went on it is true he spoke with ease and fluency, but the great quality of his speaking was its clearness, its directness and terseness. 'No man,' said Gladstone of him, 'is more successful in doing that which it is commonly supposed all speakers do, but which, in my opinion, few do, namely, in saying what he means.'" Indeed Parnell was incapable of speaking at all unless he had something definite to say and knew whereof he spoke.

A very fine tribute is paid his speech in closing the Home-Rule debate of 1886 by John Morley in his biography of Gladstone when he writes: "The Irish leader made one of the most masterful speeches that ever fell from him. Whether agreeing with or differing from the policy, every unprejudiced listener felt that this was not the mere dialectic of a party debater, dealing smartly with abstract or verbal or artificial arguments, but the utterance of a statesman with his eye firmly fixed upon the actual circumstances of the

nation for whose government this bill would make him responsible. As he deals with Ulster, with finance, with the supremacy of parliament, with the loyal minority, with the settlement of education in an Irish legislature—soberly, steadily, deliberately, with that full, familiar, deep insight into the facts of a country, which is only possible to a man who belongs to it and has passed his life in it, the effect of Mr. Parnell's speech was to make even able disputants on either side look little better than amateurs."

Considering the remarkable men who participated in this debate—Gladstone, Salisbury, Morley, Churchill and Chamberlain—this was a fine compliment indeed, especially from the pen of one of the most scholarly men in English public life.

While entertaining a contempt for the mere rhetorician it must not be supposed that he was wholly indifferent to the niceties of expression. He never attempted to say things beautifully or impressively, but he always strove desperately to say things precisely as he would have them said. In his Liverpool speech on his return from his American tour he seemed struggling for a word. His friends on the platform whispered the word they thought he wanted only to have their suggestions ignored and the speaker use another and more precise and effective word. It is probable that he gave more attention to the preparation of the speeches he delivered on his American tour than to any others of his career. He entered upon the task of stating the case of Ireland to America with fear and trembling. It was not a congenial duty. He hated crowds. An audience never failed to make him nervous. However, he had enough strength of character

to overcome his distaste, and while his American speeches were not the ponderous, powerful, polished and stirring appeals that McCarthy, Redmond and Healy have made to American audiences, they made a deep indelible impression everywhere and satisfied the Irish-Americans that in the speaker Ireland had a champion who meant business. During the tour he developed into an effective rough and ready campaigner such as Americans like. He had a way of introducing local color into his speeches and of referring to incidents and organizations at the meeting that pleased the crowds. Of all his American speeches perhaps the most complete exposition of the Irish cause and the one most conscientiously prepared was that which was delivered to the American house of representatives. The occasion must have inspired even Parnell.

It is probable that his speeches in the house of commons caused him less mental anguish and nervous effort than those spoken to the Irish-Americans and to the Irish audiences. His brother quotes him as saying that he never cared particularly what the English thought of his speeches, but in addressing an audience on Irish soil he had an intense longing for sympathy and approval. Perhaps he himself expressed his attitude when, in response to the question: "Don't you feel a little excited and proud when they all cheer you and really you?" he responded with one of his illuminative smiles: "Yes, when it is really me, when I am in the midst of a peasant crowd in Ireland."*

* The question was asked by Mrs. O'Shea, afterward Mrs. Parnell, and is recorded in her book on the Irish leader, recently published.

Perhaps, after all, the secret of Parnell's hold on the confidence and affection of the Irish people is that they could see through the cold exterior of the man and see the beating of his heart.

X

THE LAST QUARTER OF A CENTURY 1891-1912

SINCE THE PASSING OF PARNELL

THE various movements, policies and activities of the Irish patriots since the death of Parnell will require the perspective of years to determine with any degree of certitude their place in history. After the historic meeting in committee room fifteen the parliamentary party was torn by disheartening dissensions for almost a decade, with Justin McCarthy, the brilliant historian, and later John Dillon, leading the larger division, with John E. Redmond in command of the remnants of the Parnell following, and Tim Healy playing a minor rôle. This decade witnessed the treachery of the English liberals under the direction of Lord Rosebery, and the reduction of the Irish to such impotency that an attempt was actually made to reduce the Irish representation. The latter attempt literally drove the factional leaders to a unification of their forces under the leadership of Redmond, whose loyalty to the memory of Parnell here stood him in good stead. The six following years brought a perceptible brightening in the prospects for Home Rule, and the passage of the Land Purchase Act of 1903, the most sweeping land reform in the history of the

island, wrought a revolution in the condition of the tenants.

With the triumph of the liberals under Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and later under Henry Asquith, a close alliance was formed between the government and the Irish party, and here we enter controversial ground. The bitter battling between the liberals and the conservatives or unionists over the budget of Lloyd-George, and the destruction of the veto power of the house of lords, resulted in general elections in which the Irish party stood steadfastly by the liberals with the distinct understanding that the Home-Rule bill would be ultimately taken up and pushed to its passage. The events that have transpired since the original introduction of the Home-Rule bill have resulted in much bitterness and the real purport of these events must await the illumination of time. The amazing complacency with which the government contemplated the arming of the rebels of Ulster, against the prospective operation of the bill, under the leadership of Sir Edwin Carson, who was permitted to pass without criticism from the camp of armed rebels to the deliberations of the house of commons, will probably be hard to explain. The infamous massacre of the nationalists by the soldiery in the streets of Dublin because of actions that had been countenanced in Belfast will be more difficult of explanation. Out of the growing fear of treachery has developed once again the militant spirit, and under the leadership of Sir Roger Casement there has come an amazing revival of the Volunteer movement, similar to that in the days of Flood, and with more than one hundred and sixty thousand men enrolled. The situation had

reached an acute stage when the world war, now in progress, dropped the curtain on the scene. The rest is with to-morrow.

Such is the inspiring story of the struggles of the Irish people for more than a century and a half to attain those rights and liberties of which they have been deprived. It has been a story of violated treaties, of broken promises, of continuous treachery, of gibbets, dungeons, evictions, famines and massacres, but the gloom of the darkest period has been illuminated by the genius, the eloquence, the heroism of the race. The centuries, blood-stained and tear-stained, have made it plain that the Irish will not be slaves. Time and again their aspirations have been crushed by the mailed hand of might, only to flower again. Never have they acquiesced in their degradation. And never has the call to martyrdom been in vain. The "disgrace," born of the scaffold and the prison, has brought no blush to the cheek of the patriot, for they who have been stigmatized by the courts as traitors have been glorified by the Irish people as martyrs to the cause of freedom. Thus the Wexford men of '98 are not execrated and forgotten, but are treasured in the Irish heart. Emmet passed from the scaffold to immortality. The Fenians of Manchester are martyrs to the race they tried to serve. Meagher and Mitchell are glorious memories in every Irish cot on two continents and the far-flung islands of the seas. The Irish race, looking back over the century and a half that we have traced, has no apology to make to history—and the fight goes on!

No better, perhaps, can this story of Irish leaders and movements be brought to a close than in the words

of Grattan, so beautifully expressive of the spirit of every loyal son of Erin:

"I never will be satisfied as long as the meanest cottager in Ireland has a link of the British chain clanking to his rags; he may be naked, he shall not be in irons; and I do see the time at hand, the spirit has gone forth, the declaration is planted; and though great men shall apostatize, yet the cause will live; and though the public speaker shall die, yet the immortal fire shall outlive the humble organ that conveyed it, and the spirit of liberty, like the words of the holy man, shall not perish with the prophet, but survive him."

THE END

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